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Attempts to propagate the Goſpel among the Indians in New England, &c.

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NUMBER VII.

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INTRODUCTION.

IT is matter of regret to the compiler, that he has not been able, after much enquiry made by his friends and himſelf, to obtain any books upon the ſubject of Mr. Eliot's Miſſion and labors, prior to Dr. Cotton Mather's hiſtory of his life, publiſhed in the latter part of the ſeventeenth century. He that makes any *eſſays* in hiſtory, cannot but wiſh for the benefit of original writers. However, in the preſent caſe, this defect may be, in a good meaſure, ſupplied, by Dr. Cotton Mather, Mr. Neale, and Governor Hutchinſon. Theſe three gentlemen, at leaſt the two firſt, as it appears, had many of the original publications before them, when they wrote their hiſtories; and the laſt had ſome of them; and they were gentlemen much eſteemed in the province of hiſtory.

In the ſeventeenth century, not a little was done to propagate the Goſpel among the Indians in New England. Some writers indeed, contrary to hiſtoric truth, have attempted to diminiſh the work; and indeed have had the confidence to affirm, that what was done was trifling, ſcarcely worthy of being mentioned; and have paſſed ſevere cenſures upon our anceſtors; but it will appear in the ſequel, in connexion with the narratives, which have been already given, that their cenſures were ill founded—that *great pains* were taken to propagate the Goſpel among the natives; and that, tho' many rejected the offer of the Goſpel, yet the endeavors of the Miſſionaries were crowned with no ſmall ſucceſs.

However, it may ſeem, at this day, not a little ſtrange, that ſuch pious men as the early ſettlers of New England undoubtedly were in general, ſhould *ſo long* neglect to make any ſpecial attempts to chriſtianize the Heathen, conſidering that the work was ſo benevolent and excellent, and that the Charter, granted by King Charles I. to the Maſſachuſetts Company, expreſsly mentions this as one deſign of encouraging the plantation, that the emigrants

* They are kept for a ſeaſon, in the ſtate of Catechumens; and at length are formed into a church.

might have an opportunity to carry on this pious work: the words of the Charter are theſe, viz. "To win and incite the natives of that country to the knowledge and obedience of the only true God and Saviour of mankind, and the Chriſtian faith, is in our royal intention; and the adventurers' free profeſſion, is the principal end of the plantation."*

A much better apology can be made for the colony of New Plymouth, than for either Maſſachuſetts or Connecticut; and indeed a *good* apology for the *early* planters of the former.

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* "As the converſion of the Heathen was, from the firſt, one profeſſed aim of our forefathers in ſettling New England; ſo almoſt all the royal charters, grants, letters patent, and acts of government, in England, relative to this country, have made mention of, and encouraged, yea enjoined upon the ſettlers the proſecution of this pious deſign: to which purpoſe is the following paſſage in the charter of the Maſſachuſetts (uſually called the New Charter) granted in the 12th of William and Mary—"To diſpoſe of matters and things whereby our ſubjects, inhabitants of our ſaid province, may be religiouſly, peaceably and civilly governed, protected and defended; ſo as their good life, and orderly converſation may win the *Indians*, natives of the country, to the knowledge and obedience of the only true God, and Saviour of mankind, and the Chriſtian faith; which his royal majeſty, our royal grandfather, King Charles the Firſt, in his ſaid letters patent declared was his royal intention, and the adventurers' free profeſſion to be the principal end of ſaid plantation." —Dr. Mayhew's Remarks upon Mr. Apthorp.

William Penn, in the charter granted him as proprietary of Pennſylvania, by King Charles the Second, is repreſented as having it in view, in propoſing to ſettle a colony—"To reduce the ſavage natives, by gentle and juſt manners, to the love of civil ſociety and the Chriſtian religion."

The people of New Plymouth were, for many years, few in number—in very low circumſtances at their firſt ſettlement, and for many years after; having had their property greatly reduced by perſecution in their native country; by being obliged to remove to Holland, that they might enjoy that religious liberty which they were unreaſonably denied in England, and peaceably worſhip God agreeably to the dictates of their conſciences; and by the great expenſe incurred by coming to New England, and making a ſettlement here. Beſides, the lands on which they planted were far from being productive; they met with heavy loſſes at ſea; they were alſo for a conſiderable time deſtitute of a ſettled miniſter; Mr. Robinſon, their very worthy paſtor, was prevented from coming over from Holland; and after his death, for a conſiderable courſe of years, they were repeatedly diſappointed of having one fixed among them for any long term.

But the Maſſachuſetts colony in particular, could not plead ſuch ſpecial inabilities, many of the firſt planters having been gentlemen of a handſome property, ſome of them opulent, and ſundry of the original churches having been ſupplied with two miniſters each, as Boſton, Dorcheſter, Watertown, Salem, Ipſwich, Newbury,* and ſeveral others. There was no war, except that with the Pequots in 1637, till the general war in 1675. That with the Pequots was not of long continuance. Though there were repeated diſputes with the natives at other times, and there was a proſpect of war breaking out, yet by one

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* Wonder working Providence of Zion's Saviour in New England.

mean or another it was prevented, and accommodations took place.

The neglects of the original planters were obſerved by the natives, and, it may be, prejudiced the minds of many of them againſt Chriſtianity, and the profeſſors of it. The Indians aſked, "How it happened, if Chriſtianity was of ſuch importance, that for ſix and twenty years the Engliſh had ſaid nothing to them about it."* And a Sachem on Martha's Vineyard told Mr. Mayhew, "That he wondered the Engliſh ſhould be almoſt thirty years in the country, and yet the Indians fools ſtill."†—The anſwer of the Engliſh to theſe criminations was, "That they repented that they had not inſtructed the Indians in Chriſtianity long ago; telling the Indians, at the ſame time, that they were not willing to hear, &c. Governor Hutchinſon obſerves, that "as one profeſſed deſign of the colony charter was the goſpelizing the natives, ſo the long neglect of any attempt that way, cannot be excuſed."

To ſpeak of the neglects and failings of predeceſſors, or anceſtors, is not, in itſelf, a pleaſing topic; and is not to be defended upon any other principle than that of benefitting our contemporaries, and poſterity; and promoting, if it may be, an extenſive good. The miſtakes and omiſſions of thoſe that have gone before us, are exhibited, as a caveat, to thoſe that ſucceed; as well as their virtues an incentive to laudable actions.

Notwithſtanding theſe neglects, it muſt however be allowed, and ſpoken of with high commendation, that when the work of goſpelizing the Indians was begun in earneſt, it was carried on with vigor and perſeverance, both in the colonies of Maſſachuſetts and New Plymouth, by the excellent Mr. Eliot of Roxbury, near Boſton, and other pious miniſters, his aſſociates in the good work, whoſe names will be mentioned and their worthy ſervices related in the ſequel of the hiſtory. Laudable exertions were alſo made by ſeveral eminent miniſters in Connecticut to Chriſtianize the Indians in that juriſdiction. The labors of the Miſſionaries were encouraged by gentlemen of prime diſtinction in the civil department, as well as by their brethren in the miniſtry, in the ſeveral colonies now mentioned.

IT may be acceptable to ſome, who read the Evangelical Magazine, that before an account be particularly given of Mr. Eliot's faithful, laborious and ſucceſsful miſſionary labors, there ſhould be inſerted a brief account of him in the younger part of his life, (preceding his arrival in America) as drawn by Dr. C. Mather, and abridged by Rev. Thomas Prince* of Boſton.

N. B. The words included within brackets were, I ſuppoſe, inſerted by Mr. Prince.

"Mr. John Eliot was born in England [I ſuppoſe about Nov. 1604.] His parents gave him a pious education; [and] his firſt times were ſeaſoned with the fear of God, the word and prayer. He was educated at one of the univerſities; [I ſuppoſe at *Cambridge*] God had furniſhed him with a good meaſure of learning, which made him capable of divi-

* Hutchinſon's Hiſt. Maſſa. vol. i. p. 160.

† Mayhew's Indian Converts, p. 80.

* Annals, vol. ii. p. 48.

ding the word aright. He was a moſt acute grammarian—underſtood very well the [Greek and Hebrew] languages, which God firſt wrote the bible in—had a good inſight into *all the liberal arts;* but, above all, had a moſt eminent ſkill in *theology*. His firſt appearance in the world was in the difficult, but very neceſſary employment of *ſchool-maſter*, which he diſcharged with fidelity; [I ſuppoſe under Mr. Hooker, in a ſort of an academy at Little Baddow, near Chelmsford in Eſſex: See account of Mr. Hooker.] He had not paſſed many changes in the world, before he knew the meaning of a ſaving turn to God in Chriſt, by a true repentance. He had the privilege and happineſs of an *early converſion* from the ways, which original ſin diſpoſes all men unto. One of the principal inſtruments, which the God of heaven uſed in tinging and filling the mind of this choſen veſſel with good principles was that venerable *Thomas Hooker*, whoſe name in the churches of the Lord Jeſus, is as ointment poured forth. It was an acquaintance with him, that contributed, more than a little, to the accompliſhing of our Eliſha to that work to which the Moſt High had deſigned him. His *liberal education* having now the addition of *religion* to direct and improve it, gave ſuch a bias to his young ſoul, as quickly diſcovered itſelf in very ſignal inſtances. [And his being a tutor of youth] rather prepared him for the further ſervice, which his mind was now ſet upon. Wherefore having dedicated himſelf to God betimes, he could not reconcile himſelf to any leſs way of ſerving his Creator and Redeemer, than the miniſtry of the goſpel. [And] he was one mighty in the word, which enabled him to convince gainſayers, and ſhow himſelf a workman that needed not to be aſhamed. But where, alas! ſhould he have opportunities for the exerciſing of it? The *Laudian*, *Grotian*, and *Arminian* faction [then] in the *church of England*, in the proſecution of their grand plot for reducing *England* to a *moderate ſort of Popery*, had pitched on *this*, as one of their methods for it, viz. to diſenable, as faſt as they could, all the learned, godly, painful miniſters of the nation; and invent certain *Shibboleths*, for detecting and deſtroying ſuch men as were cordial friends to the reformation.

It was now a time, when there were every day, multiplied and impoſed thoſe unwarrantable ceremonies in the worſhip of God, by which the conſcience of our conſiderate Eliot counted the ſecond commandment notoriouſly violated.

It was now alſo a time, when *ſome hundreds* of thoſe good people, who had the name of *Puritans* put upon them in ſcoff and contempt, tranſported themſelves, with their families, and property into the deſerts of *America, that there they might peaceably erect Congregational Churches, and therein attend, and maintain all the pure inſtitutions of Chriſt;* having the encouragement of royal charters, that they ſhould never have any interruption in the enjoyment of thoſe *pleaſant, and precious things*. Here was a proſpect, which [ſoon] determined the devout ſoul of our young Eliot to remove into New England, while it was yet a land not ſown. He ſoon enliſted himſelf among thoſe valiant ſoldiers of Chriſt, who cheerfully encountered, firſt the perils of the *Atlantic Ocean*, and then

the Fatigues of a *New Engliſh Wilderneſs*, that they might have an undiſturbed communion with him, in his appointments here. He came hither in Nov. 1631 [at 27 years of Age] among thoſe bleſſed old planters, who laid the foundation of a remarkable country, devoted to the exerciſe of the proteſtant religion, in its pureſt, and higheſt reformation."

This was the man, whom the great head of the Church ſaw fit to improve as an inſtrument of erecting his kingdom in many of thoſe places where the prince of the power of the air had had his ſeat for ages, and reigned without control.

On his arrival in New England, he ſoon joined himſelf to the church at Boſton. Mr. Wilſon, the paſtor of that church was gone back to England, that he might perfect the ſettlement of his affairs; and in his abſence Mr. Eliot ſupplied his place. Upon the return of Mr. Wilſon, that church intended to have introduced Mr. Eliot as his colleague; but their deſign was prevented from being carried into effect. Mr. Eliot had made an engagement to a ſelect number of Chriſtian friends in England, that if they ſhould come into theſe parts, before he ſhould have the paſtoral care of any other church, he would ſerve them in the goſpel. It happened that theſe friends tranſported themſelves hither the year after, and choſe, for their habitation, the town, which they called Roxbury. A church being now gathered at this place, he was, in Nov. 1632, ordained teacher of the church in Roxbury, and officiated in it about 58 years.

Mr. Eliot was faithful to the people of his *own* charge; and was deſirous of being as *extenſively* uſeful, as lay in his power. He ſaw the Natives immerſed in great ignorance of the true God, and of that religion, which he had taught from heaven. He found that they had embraced groſs errors of a pernicious tendency. He obſerved impiety, and immorality practiſed among them in general with but little ſhame or reſtraint. He ſaw them immerſed in the vileſt ſuperſtitions —addicted to the moſt ſhocking rites, which they viewed under the character of religious rites; worſhipping the devil, the prince of the power of the air, ſometimes under the name of *Chepian*, but more generally under that of *Abamocko*, or *Hobamocko*. Him they conſidered as a great evil ſpirit, the author of natural evil. To him they offered ſacrifices upon particular occaſions to avert his diſpleaſure, and to incline him to remove any ſpecial calamities which had befallen them. They appeared groſsly ignorant of the true worſhip of God. They had many vices. They were falſe, malicious, and revengeful. The leaſt injury produced in them a violent hatred; and if the injury was very great, nothing could allay their hatred, but the death of the object of their paſſion. They were extremely cruel to their enemies; cutting, and mangling their bodies; and then broiling them alive upon hot embers, and inflicting the moſt exquiſite torments they could invent. The *men* were idle to a proverb, never employing themſelves about any other buſineſs, than what was of abſolute neceſſity to their ſupport, and ſuch as the women were not capable of. As ſoon as they had a taſte of ardent ſpirits, they diſcovered a ſtrong appetite for them,

and their thirſt ſoon became inſatiable.

Such ſpectacles moved the compaſſion of Mr. Eliot. He came to a reſolution to make ſtrenuous exertions, as far as he was able, or his ſituation would allow, to inſtruct them in Chriſtianity, and reduce them, if poſſible, to ſome degree of religious and civil order.

He was fully ſenſible of the great importance of learning the language of the natives, in order to carry on, with hopeful proſpect of ſucceſs, the great and arduous work he had in contemplation; that a complete acquaintance with it muſt afford him ſuperior advantages in his intended miſſionary ſervices. He well knew the benefit of the gift of languages to the Apoſtles, and other primitive Chriſtians, not only as a miraculous atteſtation to the truth of Chriſtianity, and of the divine miſſion of thoſe who taught it; but alſo as an important mean for the *ſpeedy propagation* of the goſpel among the different nations of the earth. What he could have no expectation of receiving in a miraculous way, he determined to apply himſelf to gain by his own vigorous endeavors.

Accordingly, about the year 1644, or perhaps a little before, about two years prior to his entering upon his public miſſionary labors, he took great pains to learn the Indian language. In order to facilitate the buſineſs, he hired a ſprightly and ingenious native, who alſo ſpake Engliſh well, to aſſiſt him. The Indian language muſt be ſuppoſed to have been very difficult to learn by reaſon of the exceſſive length* of a very great number of the words; and as it has not the leaſt affinity with any of the European languages, as far as can be diſcovered by any among us acquainted with *them*, and the *Indian*; neither has it any affinity to the learned languages. Gov. Hutchinſon obſerves, "That many people pleaſed themſelves with a conjecture, that the Indians in America are the deſcendants of the ten tribes of Iſrael: But that there was as little affinity between the Indian and the Hebrew language, as between the languages of any two nations upon the earth." The like may be ſaid concerning the other learned languages. But Mr. Eliot's zeal, and reſolution ſurmounted all difficulties; ſo

* Dr. C. Mather gives a ſpecimen of the extreme length of ſome Indian words: Some readers may be gratified with quoting them; for inſtance, *Nummatchekodtantamoonganunnonaſh*; this ſignifies no more, in Engliſh, than our Luſts. *Noowomantammoonkanunnonnaſh* —our Loves, in Engliſh. *Kummogkodonattoottummoocheongannunnonaſh*—This word is ſaid to ſignify no more than, our Queſtion. And tho' perhaps, not many words in their language were equal, in extent to theſe; yet if any have opportunity and inclination to examine Roger Williams's key into the language of the Indians in New-England, publiſhed, not long ſince, by the Maſſachuſetts hiſtorical ſociety, they will find many of the words of an immoderate length. The language of thoſe weſtern Indians formerly called the five, and frequently the ſix nations, was ſo different from that of the natives of Maſſachuſetts, and New Plymouth, that they could not underſtand each other. At the ſame time, many words of the former are repreſented as being immoderately long: Mr. Colden in his hiſtory of the five nations obſerves, "That they have but few *radical* words; but that they compound their words without end—That the words expreſſing things lately come to their knowledge are all compounds; and that ſometimes one word among them includes an entire definition of the thing." Hiſt. v. i. p. 16.

that by converſing with the Indian he hired, and compiling ſome diſcourſes by his aſſiſtance, he quickly became maſter of this difficult language: And after ſome time, by the help of the ſame Indian, and by his own indefatigable pains and induſtry, he became ſo complete a maſter of it, as to be capable of reducing it to a method, which afterwards he publiſhed to the world under the title of the *Indian grammar.* Having finiſhed his grammar, at the cloſe he writes thus; "*Prayers and pains, thro' faith in Chriſt Jeſus, will do any thing.*"*

"In the year 1646, the general court of Maſſachuſetts paſſed the firſt act, or order to encourage the carrying the goſpel to the Indians; and it was recommended to the elders to conſider how it might beſt be done."† I have never met with any account of their convention (as doubtleſs they formed one) nor of the anſwer they gave to the queſtion propoſed by the aſſembly. Doubtleſs many valuable ſentiments were communicated by ſo judicious an aſſembly as that compoſed of the firſt miniſters who came over, many of whom were gentlemen of diſtinguiſhed abilities, and of as good an education as could be obtained, at that day, in the univerſities in England.

There was a concurrence of many things to encourage Mr. Eliot in the benevolent deſign he had formed to goſpelize the Indians; and to proſecute the work with vigor when he had undertaken it. All the good men in the country were glad of his engaging in ſuch an undertaking: The miniſters eſpecially encouraged him; and when he had entered upon his Miſſionary labors, thoſe in the neighborhood kindly ſupplied his place, and performed, in part, his work for him at Roxbury, while he was abroad, laboring among the heathen, or thoſe that had embraced Chriſtianity, but needed further inſtructions from him: And it was an happy circumſtance, that ſo many churches in that neighborhood had each a paſtor and teacher, ſo that more could be done in ſupplying Mr. Eliot's place than otherwiſe.

He was further awakened by thoſe expreſſions in the royal charter, which have been already mentioned.

And the remarkable zeal of the Romiſh Miſſionaries, compaſſing ſea, and land, that they might make proſelytes, made his devout mind think of it with diſdain, that we ſhould be leſs zealous and diligent in evangelizing the Indians, among whom we dwell.

He was further encouraged by the notice, which was taken of this good work in England, ſoon after it was begun—by the contributions raiſed, and the ſociety formed to afford pecuniary aid; a more particular account of which will be given in its place.

Nor was he a little animated to purſue his laborious ſervices, by the divine promiſe made to the Meſſiah—"I ſhall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the earth for thy poſſeſſion."*

Having prepared himſelf for going forth as a public inſtructor of the Indians, he made his firſt eſſay on the 28th of Oct. 1646, accompanied by three others, having given previous notice to the

* Dr. C. Mather.—Mr. Neale.

† Hutchinſon's Hiſt. v. i. p. 161.

* Magnalia, B. iii.

neighboring Indians of his deſire to inſtruct them in the Chriſtian faith. Wauban, a wiſe and grave man, and in other reſpects, a perſon of diſtinction, with five or ſix of the Natives, met them at ſome diſtance from their wigwams, and bidding them welcome, conducted them into a large apartment, where a great number of the Indians were collected to hear this new doctrine, which the Engliſh propoſed to teach them. After a ſolemn prayer, Mr. Eliot delivered a diſcourſe to them in the Indian tongue, which continued ſomewhat more than an hour, comprehending many of the moſt important articles of natural and revealed religion. In this diſcourſe he rehearſed and explained the ten commandments; informing them, at the ſame time, of the dreadful curſe of God, that would fall upon all thoſe that break them. He then informed them of the coming of Jeſus Chriſt into the world, to recover mankind from ſin, and the puniſhment of it.—He told them who Jeſus Chriſt was; where he was gone; and how he would come one day again to judge the world in flaming fire. He informed them likewiſe of the bleſſed ſtate of all thoſe, who believe in Chriſt, and obey his goſpel. He ſpake alſo of the creation and fall of man—of the infinite greatneſs of God, the maker of all things—of the joys of heaven, and the torments of hell; perſuading to repentance and holy practice. He applied all to the condition of the Indians preſent. Having finiſhed his diſcourſe, he aſked them, Whether they underſtood? And with a general voice they ſaid, that they underſtood all.—Mr. Eliot and his companions entered into a free converſation with the Indians, and deſired them to propoſe ſuch queſtions as they tho't proper reſpecting the ſermon, or any other point not contained in it; and it became the general, if not conſtant practice, after a ſermon, for as many of the Indians as deſired it, to ſtand up, and propoſe queſtions to the preacher. Some of their queſtions would be philoſophical, ſome upon abſtruſe points in divinity, &c. ſo that no ſmall acquaintance with theology, philoſophy, and other ſciences, was requiſite to give juſt and ſatisfactory anſwers.*

At this firſt conference, the following queſtions were put by this poor people. One ſtood up, and aſked, "How he might come to know Jeſus Chriſt?" Another enquired, "Whether Engliſhmen were ever ſo ignorant of Jeſus Chriſt as themſelves?" A third (probably in the ſimplicity of his heart) "Whether Jeſus Chriſt

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* Gov. Hutchinſon quotes the following queſtions from the journal of Col. Goffe, one of the judges of King Charles the Firſt. This gentleman attended an Indian Lecture in 1660, after the natives had been under inſtruction 13 or 14 years. He takes notice of the following queſtions put by them, viz.

1. In your text are theſe words, "Save yourſelves from this untoward generation." In other ſcriptures it ſtands, We can do nothing of ourſelves; how can this be reconciled?

2. You ſay, "The word is the ſword of the ſpirit, by which their hearts were pricked." How ſhall I uſe the ſword of the ſpirit to prick my heart?

3. What was the ſin of Judas, or how did he ſin in betraying Chriſt, ſeeing it was what God had appointed?

4. The anſwer to thoſe converts was, "Repent, and be baptized, &c.; but ye do not ſuffer us to be baptized; therefore, I fear none of the Indians' ſins are forgiven; and my heart is weary with that fear; for it is ſaid in Matthew, Whoſe ſins ye bind on earth are bound in heaven."

could underſtand prayers in the Indian language?" Another propoſed this queſtion, "How there could be an image of God, ſince it was forbidden in the ſecond commandment?" Another, "Whether if the father be naught, and the child good, God will be offended with that child, becauſe in the ſecond commandment it is ſaid, "He viſits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children?" The laſt queſtion that was aſked at this meeting was, "How all the world became full of people, if they were all drowned in the flood?" Mr. Eliot and his friends gave plain and familiar anſwers.

It was alſo Mr. Eliot's cuſtom to put proper queſtions to his Indian auditors: And by hearing their queries, and anſwering them, and interrogating thoſe under inſtruction in his turn, he not only made a trial of their profiting by his miniſtry; but alſo gave an edge to what he delivered to them.*

This conference laſted about three hours; and after it was cloſed, Mr. Eliot and his companions returned home; and were ſo well pleaſed with the reception they met with among the natives, and the hopeful proſpect of ſucceſs, that they were encouraged to have another interview with the people, which they accompliſhed within a few days: an account of this, together with ſucceeding conferences, and ſeveral other intereſting events reſpecting Mr. Eliot's miſſionary ſervices, may be expected in the following number.

* Magnalia, B. iii. p. 193, and 196. Hutchinſon's hiſtory of Maſſachuſetts. Neale's hiſt. of N. England, vol. i. p. 242, 243; he made extracts from a book entitled Day-breaking of the Goſpel in New England; London 1647, ſome of which have been quoted.

Anſwer to a Queſtion.

[Continued from page 338.]

NUMBER II.

IN anſwering this queſtion, it has been ſhewn, in a preceding number, that the atonement of Chriſt is infinitely full or ſufficient for the ſalvation of all mankind; that therefore the want of ſuch an atonement cannot be the reaſon why all are not ſaved.

It is propoſed then to ſhew,

II. That the calls and invitations of the goſpel, and the ſolemn declaration, that God hath no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that they would turn and live, are conſiſtent with his leaving numbers to go on in ſin and periſh.

And in doing this it is neceſſary to conſider the preciſe meaning of the declaration, that God hath no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that they turn and live. This paſſage muſt mean, either that God, taking all things into view, does not upon the whole chooſe the death or puniſhment of any of the wicked, but actually chooſes that they ſhould all turn and live; or elſe it muſt mean, that he takes no direct pleaſure in their death or miſery, in itſelf conſidered, but that their turning and obtaining life is in itſelf more pleaſing and deſirable. But it is evident from various conſiderations, that the paſſage cannot be rationally underſtood in the ſenſe firſt ſtated. For if the Moſt High, all things conſidered, did actually chooſe that none of the wicked ſhould go on in ſin and periſh, but that all ſhould turn and live; then he muſt be greatly diſappointed in his real choice and deſire. For the ſcriptures expreſsly declare, that "wide is the gate and broad is the way which

leadeth to deſtruction, and many there be that go in thereat;" and it is allowed in the ſtatement of the queſtion, that a number do go on in ſin and periſh. And if Jehovah is thus diſappointed in his actual choice and deſigns, it muſt certainly occaſion him great ſorrow and unhappineſs. None therefore, who have any juſt ideas of the divine perfections and felicity, can for a moment indulge the ſuppoſition that the infinitely wiſe, powerful and perfect God is thus fruſtrated in his deſires, and rendered unhappy by his creatures.

Further, if Jehovah, upon the whole, did actually chooſe that all the wicked ſhould repent and be ſaved, he certainly would convert and ſave them; ſince he poſſeſſes almighty power, has all hearts in his hand, and can with the greateſt eaſe turn and bring the moſt ſtubborn to repentance, if he pleaſes. As God does not in fact bring all ſinners to repentance, it is therefore certain, that upon the whole he does not really chooſe to do it.

Again, how derogatory would it be to the divine perfections, to ſuppoſe that the Moſt High did upon the whole actually chooſe that all the wicked ſhould be brought to repentance and ſalvation, and yet was not able to accompliſh his choice?

Theſe various conſiderations clearly ſhew, that the import of this paſſage muſt be, that God has no direct pleaſure in the death or miſery of the wicked, in itſelf conſidered, but that their repentance and ſalvation in themſelves, or aſide from other infinitely wiſe reaſons, in the divine government would be much more pleaſing to him than their deſtruction. And that this is the truth is manifeſt from the divine character, and from other declarations of ſcripture. For "God is love," or benevolence; and therefore it is certain, that he cannot take any pleaſure directly from the puniſhment or miſery of the wicked, and that he never puniſhes but when it is neceſſary to anſwer wiſe and benevolent purpoſes, and promote the general good. But on the contrary, it is evident, that their repentance and ſalvation would be in themſelves delightful, and afford direct pleaſure to the holy, benevolent mind of Jehovah, if conſiſtent with the wiſeſt ſcheme of government. It is therefore declared, that God "doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men," and that to puniſh is his ſtrange or unpleaſant work. But it is ſaid, that "there is joy in heaven over one ſinner that repenteth," teaching, that it is a pleaſing, joyful event to God and the heavenly world. Theſe conſiderations confirm the ſenſe of the paſſage laſt given; that God takes no pleaſure in the miſery of the wicked, in itſelf conſidered. Thus what the Moſt High expreſſes in this paſſage towards ſinners, is very ſimilar to what kind, benevolent parents expreſs towards their diſobedient children. They often addreſs their children in expreſſions ſimilar to what God makes uſe of in this paſſage; *We take no pleaſure in your puniſhment or pain, but it is much more pleaſing to us to ſee you reform and be obedient.* Such language in a parent would imply, not that he would never chooſe to puniſh any of his children when they deſerved it, and the good of the family required it, but that their puniſhment was not in itſelf agreeable to him, and that he took no direct pleaſure in it. So the

declaration, that God hath no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that they turn and live, imports, that the miſery or puniſhment of the wicked is not in itſelf pleaſing to him; but is by no means ſaying that he will ſend his Holy Spirit to renew and bring all mankind to repentance and ſalvation. It is therefore very far from engaging or implying, that he will never leave any to go on in ſin and finally ſuffer that everlaſting puniſhment which they have juſtly deſerved; when he ſees it beſt in order to diſplay his juſtice and perfections, promote the good of his kingdom, and anſwer other wiſe and benevolent purpoſes. Neither are the calls and invitations of the goſpel at all inconſiſtent with God's leaving numbers to go on in ſin and periſh. The divine offers and invitations, ſuch as "Look unto me, and be ye ſaved, all the ends of the earth —Turn ye, turn ye; for why will ye die?—Whoſoever will, let him take the water of life freely," are no promiſes that the holy Spirit ſhall be ſent to renew and make all who are favored with theſe calls and offers willing to comply with them. God, in giving mankind theſe gracious calls and invitations, no more promiſes to bring them to a cordial compliance, by the efficacious influences of his Holy Spirit, than the king who in the parable ſent his ſervants to call thoſe that were bidden to the marriage ſupper, did by this invitation promiſe to compel all to come in by force, who neglected the call. No one ever ſuppoſed, that his offering a peculiar favor to another upon a moſt reaſonable condition, was promiſing that he would oblige the other, if unwilling, to accept or comply with the propoſed condition. Certainly then the Moſt High, by his kind calls and invitations to ſinners, has made them no promiſe that he will renew and influence them to a compliance.

Neither do theſe invitations lay God under any obligations to do this for the impenitent. Can any pretend to ſay, that becauſe God is ſo kind and merciful as freely to offer pardon and ſalvation to unworthy, hell-deſerving ſinners upon the moſt reaſonable terms; therefore he is under obligation to diſpoſe them to a cordial compliance by the efficacious influences of his ſpirit, upon their refuſing theſe offers? Or in other words, does their ungratefully neglecting one favor, oblige God in point of juſtice to do them another? Should a kind, generous benefactor provide a plentiful entertainment, and invite a number of unworthy beggars, and ſhould they ungratefully refuſe his kind invitation, ſurely no one could ſay, that he was under obligations to ſend his ſervants and compel them to come.

Since therefore the calls and invitations of the goſpel are no promiſe, that God will ſend his ſpirit, and make ſinners willing to comply with theſe, and do not lay him under any obligation to do this; how are they at all inconſiſtent with his leaving numbers to go on in ſin and periſh? Where is the leaſt appearance of inconſiſtency for God to call, warn, and invite ſinners to repent and be ſaved—to ſet motives of infinite weight before them, and yet leave them to follow their own choice, by going on in the ways of ſin to deſtruction? Jehovah, in thus leaving the impenitent to periſh in their ſins, when he ſees it beſt for the general good, violates no promiſe, no obligation of juſ-

tice or benevolence. Neither does he injure the wicked or give them any juſt ground of complaint.—For if they will ungratefully refuſe or neglect the infinitely gracious and important calls and invitations of the goſpel, they are certainly exceedingly criminal, and wholly inexcuſable.

The invitations and offers of the goſpel cannot be rationally underſtood as importing any thing more, than that God is willing and ready to pardon and ſave all, who repent and comply with the terms of ſalvation; and that their repentance is in itſelf pleaſing to him. But this, as already ſhewn, does not imply, that God will not leave any to go on in ſin and periſh; when he ſees it beſt to anſwer wiſe purpoſes. Should the Moſt High refuſe to pardon and ſave repenting, returning ſinners, he might be juſtly accuſed of a want of conſiſtency and ſincerity in his calls, offers and invitations. But to accuſe him of this, becauſe he does not renew and diſpoſe all mankind, by the efficacious influence of his ſpirit, to a cordial compliance with the goſpel invitations, is moſt unreaſonable and groundleſs.

Further, that God is ſincere in his calls and invitations, and in the repreſentations of ſcripture, that the return and ſalvation of ſinners is in itſelf more pleaſing to him, than their deſtruction, is manifeſt from his conduct, as well as from the declarations of his word. For he has given his well beloved Son to endure the ſevereſt pains and ſufferings, that he might open for mankind a way of life and ſalvation, and reſcue numbers from everlaſting deſtruction. He has given them his holy word to teach them the paths of duty and the way of ſalvation, and has ſet before them motives of infinite importance to influence them to receive the Saviour. He has directed his miniſters to preach the goſpel to every creature—to warn and perſuade ſinners, by the moſt important and endearing conſiderations, to ſecure their eternal concerns, and to pray them in Chriſt's ſtead to become reconciled unto God.

He ſtrives with them by his ſpirit, by the convictions of their own conſciences, and by the warning voice of his providence. In addition to all theſe powerful means, which are calculated to bring ſinners to repentance, God does, by the ſpecial efficacious influences of his ſpirit, overcome the inveterate oppoſition of the human heart, and diſpoſe thouſands in every age to a cordial compliance with the terms of the goſpel. And he kindly welcomes all penitent, returning ſinners, however vile and unworthy—adopts them into his family, and makes them children and heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jeſus Chriſt to all the joys and honors of that glorious inheritance, which is incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away. Thus it is manifeſt, from the conduct and dealings of God, as well as from the declarations of his word, that he is ſincere in the calls and invitations of the goſpel.

In the caſe of the impenitent, theſe invitations are no promiſe of ſpecial, renewing grace, but import the two following things, firſt, a declaration that all difficulties, in the way of the ſinner's ſalvation, except what ariſe from his own heart, are removed; and ſecondly, an expreſſion of the ſinner's duty. Therefore it is eaſy to ſee that God is ready to receive every returning ſinner, and that he takes no pleaſure in the death

or everlaſting puniſhment of the wicked in itſelf conſidered, but is more pleaſed with their repentance and ſalvation. For were not this the caſe, and did he not take pleaſure in the return and ſalvation of ſinners; he certainly would not uſe ſo many means to effect and promote their ſalvation—would not thus bring ſo many to repentance, by the efficacious influences of his ſpirit, and kindly receive and welcome every true penitent however vile and criminal. And God's leaving ſome to go on in ſin and periſh, when he in infinite wiſdom ſees it beſt, no more contradicts the declaration, that he takes no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that they would turn and live, or proves, that their puniſhment or miſery is in itſelf pleaſing to him; than a kind parent's puniſhing a vicious diſobedient child, when the good of the family requires it, proves, that he is pleaſed with the pain of his child. In both theſe caſes, the pain or puniſhment is by the ſuppoſition inflicted to anſwer wiſe purpoſes, and to promote a greater good, and therefore is a dictate of benevolence.

(To be continued.)

Thoughts on the perſeverance of Saints.

IT is objected to the certain perſeverance of the ſaints, that the doctrine has an unholy tendency, and is, therefore, not a doctrine according to godlineſs. The deſign of the following tho'ts is to examine this objection.

If the ſentiment objected be true, it muſt be on the ground of theſe two things. 1. That all true ſaints have certain evidence of being ſuch; and 2. That their religion is founded in a ſupreme regard to their own happineſs. If they do not know themſelves to be ſaints, its being certain, that ſaints will perſevere, can have no evil tendency, in reſpect to them. Beſide, if their religion be not ſelfiſh, but diſintereſted and holy, having God for its ſupreme object, the doctrine objected to can furniſh no motives to be leſs holy, or leſs active in all the duties of an holy life. It is only on the ground of ſaints being governed by ſelfiſh motives, and being certain withal of being ſaints, which can give influence to this doctrine, to render them leſs zealous and perſevering than otherwiſe.

But the firſt thing, taken for granted in the objection, viz. that all ſaints have certain evidence that they are ſuch, is not true. They in common know, pretty nearly, and many times, very preciſely, at what time old things paſſed away in them, and all things became new. Indeed this, which is fundamental to evangelical holineſs, cannot have taken place, at years of underſtanding, without their being conſcious and very certain of a change. But their hope, notwithſtanding, is often wavering. They are very doubtful, not whether a change in them be real, but whether it be genuine. Aſſurance, if well founded, is always in proportion to the evidence of being renewed and ſanctified. This evidence is not to be expected from one day's experience, but from a life of perſevering holineſs. Hence the prophet—"Then ſhall ye know, if ye follow on to know the Lord." Hence too the apoſtle's exhortation, "Giving diligence to make your calling and election ſure."—What may be properly called aſ-

ſurance of ſalvation is a very high attainment in religion, which is not to be expected, in ordinary caſes, without time ſufficient to have bro't forth much fruit. As religion is liable to be counterfeited, and as the counterfeit very ſtrikingly reſembles the reality, it muſt be tried, and thence proved, before the ſubjects of it can have warrant for any high degree of aſſurance. That from which men apoſtatize when tried, is thence proved not to have been genuine. Accordingly, whatever ground of aſſured confidence there is, that all, who have once been made holy, will perſevere in holineſs, and finally be ſaved, ſtill a great proportion of real ſaints have not the ſame confidence reſpecting themſelves. Nay, they may, at times, have the moſt ſerious doubts, whether they belong to the houſehold of faith. Hence the certain perſeverance and ſalvation of all, who have once been ſanctified in Chriſt, has no tendency to make them loiter, in the race ſet before them;—it affords no conſolation or hope, reſpecting themſelves, any farther than they continue in the way of holineſs, and thereby furniſh the proper evidence, that their names are written in heaven. —The evidence, that the ſaints will endure to the end and be ſaved, is of *one* ſort, and that which proves men to be ſaints, of *another*. The former is found in the promiſe and faithfulneſs of God, and the latter, in the holy experiences and lives of the ſaints.

Again, the ſecond thing taken for granted, in the objection of unholy tendency, to the doctrine of perſeverance, is not true; viz. That the governing motive with ſaints to perſevere is a ſupreme regard to their own happineſs. It is, in a ſort, excluſively on this ground, that it can have the evil tendency alledged. It cannot have it, on the ſuppoſition that all ſaints infallibly know their election of God, if governed in their lives by diſintereſted and holy motives. But the fact is, their higheſt motive, and that by which they are ſupremely influenced to hold on their way, is their ſupreme and diſintereſted love to God, the Redeemer, and his cauſe. It is not founded in an apprehenſion of God's love to them in particular, and the proſpect of their own happineſs. They delight in God's law, *after the inward man;* and that becauſe *it is holy, juſt and good.* It is therefore their meat and drink to do his will. They would prefer a life of holineſs, from the delight which they take, in pleaſing and honoring their God and Saviour, were there no object of either hope or fear, beyond the grave. But if ſuch be their governing motive, its influence cannot be deſtroyed, or even leſſened, by any certainty, that all ſaints will continue to act under ſuch influence, and thence to perſevere in well doing.

It hence appears, that thoſe, who urge the objection here conſidered, miſtake both the nature and the eſſential evidence of true religion. They neceſſarily found their love to God, on an apprehenſion of his love to them, and not on his ſupreme and infinite lovelineſs. Hence they make it the ſame in eſſence with the love which ſinners have towards thoſe who love them. It is accordingly true, that thoſe whoſe religion is founded in ſupreme ſelfiſhneſs, and who thence love God, under a miſtaken apprehenſion that he loves them, do often, in the time of temptation, fall away from the religion which they ſeem to have.

Nor is this at all ſurpriſing. Such perſons have no root in them which ſhould be expected to bring forth fruit, when put to the teſt. A religion of ſuch ſort may doubtleſs be loſt. Yea, it is what we are taught to expect, not only from the nature of it, but from the expreſs declaration of Chriſt; Every plant which my heavenly father hath not planted, ſhall be plucked up.

It is natural here to notice, that thoſe generally who deny the certain perſeverance of ſaints, deny alſo the ſpecial and diſtinguſhing grace of God, in renewing and ſanctifying the human heart. They inſiſt, that God does no more for one than another; that the ſpirit is given to all, in the ſame meaſure. They accordingly hold, that when any become holy, it is becauſe they do more than others, in the improvement of that grace which is common to all; and hence, that they make themſelves to differ. Nor is it wonderful, that a religion originating in ſelf and ſtanding in their own ſtrength, ſhould ſometimes be loſt. It frequently is, in fact. This is one reaſon why the word of God, ſpeaking on this ſubject, is ſo often miſunderſtood. All this is conſiſtent with the nature of a religion, which is acquired by ſelfiſh creatures, and under the influence of ſelfiſh motives. Such a religion muſt neceſſarily be ſelfiſh, and therefore in its nature liable to wax old and vaniſh away. But true ſaints have not ſo learned Chriſt. They are taught of God, both by his word and ſpirit, to believe, that men are by nature dead in treſpaſſes and ſins; that they never do any thing towards their recovery to ſpiritual life; accordingly, that when made alive unto God, thro' Jeſus Chriſt, it is owing wholly to the working of his mighty power. Therefore, ſaith the apoſtle, *You hath he quickened, who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins. But God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in ſins, hath quickened us together with Chriſt. Not by works of righteouſneſs, which we had done, but according to his mercy he ſaved us, by the waſhing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghoſt. Who, therefore, hath made thee to differ from another?* The anſwer muſt be in the words of the apoſtle, *by the grace of God I am what I am. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy:* and, *he, who hath begun a good work in them, will carry it on, until the day of the Lord Jeſus. He hath ſaid, I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee.* Hence, *tho' the righteous fall, he ſhall not be utterly caſt down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.* Agreeably to all this ſaith the God of grace, I *will put my laws in their hearts*, and *in their minds will I write them, and their ſins and iniquities will I remember no more.*

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It is hence evident, that the doctrine of perſeverance, when fairly ſtated, inſtead of the contrary, is of a moſt holy tendency, and muſt have anſwerable effect on all the upright in heart. This is the only plan, on which the grace of God, as diſplayed in the ſalvation of ſinners, can be properly ſeen and felt. We ſee, accordingly, that the objection here conſidered, is wholly applicable to the oppoſite doctrine; that the whole tendency of men's thinking they have made themſelves to differ, and that the difference when effected, depends on themſelves, and not on the promiſe and grace of God, is to eradicate a ſenſe of obligation to him, and to cheriſh a ſelf-righteous ſpirit, which prepares the way for apoſtacy and ruin.

TROPHIMUS.

On the Reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt.

THE reſurrection of our bodies, and future rewards and puniſhments according to the deeds done in the body, are doc- [illegible] of divine revelation, and eſpecially of the goſpel of Chriſt. He is the firſt, who hath plainly declared, that *all who are in the graves ſhall hear the voice of the Son of God, and ſhall come forth; they that have done good, unto the reſurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the reſurrection of damnation.* This being true, the righteous have cauſe to rejoice; and the unrighteous to fear and tremble. But let it be remembered, that this truth reſts on the idea, that Chriſt gave his life a ranſom for us—that he conquered death and the grave, and aroſe triumphant.—Now if Chriſt be not riſen, our ranſom is not paid—we are yet in our ſins: All our preaching—all our attendance on means are vain: All our faith in Chriſt, all our hopes and expectations concerning a future world are vain, and without any rational foundation.

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The truth of the reſurrection of Chriſt depends, altogether, on hiſtorical facts; and, for the ſake of brevity, I will confine myſelf to the apoſtolic teſtimony, which will be abundantly ſufficient, if we will allow the ſame degree of credit to attach to it, which we give to common hiſtory; and, that human nature was the ſame then, as now. And this much, no candid infidel will refuſe.

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The truth of the reſurrection of Chriſt depends, altogether, on hiſtorical facts; and, for the ſake of brevity, I will confine myſelf to the apoſtolic teſtimony, which will be abundantly ſufficient, if we will allow the ſame degree of credit to attach to it, which we give to common hiſtory; and, that human nature was the ſame then, as now. And this much, no candid infidel will refuſe.

It will be needleſs to enter into particulars, concerning the trial, death and reſurrection of Chriſt, as reported by the evangeliſts: Every

one has, or ought to have read them with care and attention. And if any ſtill doubt of the truth of the facts, reported in the goſpel, concerning the death and reſurrection of Chriſt, let them reperuſe them, and they will better judge of what I ſhall ſay.

The ſum of the evidence of the apoſtles, for the death and reſurrection of Chriſt, in the form of an affidavit, would ſtand thus, viz.

We, the apoſtles of Jeſus Chriſt, declare, that we ſaw him crucified, dead and buried—that neither we, nor any of his diſciples have taken him away; nor could we have done it, if we would, for the chief prieſts and rulers had ſecured the doors of the tomb, with the governor's ſeal, and ſet a guard of ſoldiers to watch it, hoping to prevent his riſing on the third day, as he had predicted. Yet, early in the morning of the third day, ſome of us, with others, went to the tomb, and found the guard gone; and the ſtone rolled away. Two of us, John and Peter, and two women, went into the tomb and found it empty of the body of Jeſus: The reſt of us heard from thoſe, who were eye-witneſſes. Furthermore, we know his body was not taken away by others; becauſe, we ſaw it when dead, and afterwards when alive. We ſaw him, repeatedly, for forty days together, and converſed with him, after his reſurrection.—We had been long and intimately acquainted with him, and knew his perſon perfectly well.—We, alſo, handled the body we ſaw, and know it had fleſh and bones.—"We are ſure it was the ſame body which hung upon the croſs, for we ſaw the wound in his ſide, and the print of the nails in his hands and feet." Theſe things we teſtify before God and man; and for the truth of them, we pledge our lives, and our all.

This is the plain and obvious teſtimony of the apoſtles, for the death and reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt, and is directly in point; the witneſſes are numerous; and, in any court of juſtice, would be deemed ſufficient to ſubſtantiate the facts which they atteſt. On this evidence, we ground our faith in the reſurrection of Chriſt; and no infidel will deny, that it is the true apoſtolic teſtimony. Thus far we are agreed. But, to evade the force of this evidence, the enemies of the croſs plead the incompetency of the witneſſes, as being, either deceived themſelves, or having a deſign to deceive others. This we deny. Here then we are at iſſue.

It is certain, the apoſtles could not be deceived in this caſe. They were of age and knowledge to judge of any facts, which were to be teſted by the bodily ſenſes. They had been long acquainted with Jeſus, and knew him as well, as any man can know another. And though illiterate men, they could judge whether Jeſus was wounded or not—whether he was dead or alive—whether they ſaw, heard and handled him; and converſed with him for forty days together, after they had ſeen him dead and buried.—Of ſuch facts, they were capable of judging as well as Pilate himſelf, and could not be deceived: All the proofs of Chriſt's reſurrection were teſted by the bodily ſenſes, and not by reaſoning: They could ſee, hear, and feel, as well as the moſt acute philoſopher; conſequently, they were proper judges, and could not be miſtaken in this caſe of the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt.

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were, to ſay the leaſt, as much concerned to know and ſpeak the truth, as any men on earth; nor could any men have leſs motives to miſrepreſent. Chriſt had choſen them for his immediate attendants and apoſtles.—He declared himſelf the true Meſſiah and Son of God; and wrought a variety of miracles to prove it.—He informed them, that he came to give his life a ranſom for the life of the world—that he muſt be killed by the Jews; but, ſhould ariſe the third day, and would meet and converſe with them again; after which, he ſhould aſcend to his God and their God, to his Father and their Father, to prepare everlaſting abodes for them. He conſtituted them his miniſters; and promiſed them his holy ſpirit to direct and aſſiſt them in all their duty, and to comfort and ſupport them under all their trials; and, through them, to ſpread the goſpel and build his church through the world, notwithſtanding all oppoſition.

Now, as the apoſtles knew Chriſt was put to death by the Jews, they knew all this account was a grand impoſture—a mere farce, unleſs he aroſe from the dead on the third day. Except they knew Jeſus was alive from the dead, they knew they were ſtill in their ſins, and without hope towards God; and that they could have no dependance on his promiſes. As apoſtles, it was their intereſt, above all men, to know the truth in this caſe. And if they knew, or had reaſon to believe he was not riſen, it was peculiarly their intereſt to have publiſhed their reaſons; it would have ſettled all difficulties between them and the chief prieſts, ſcribes and phariſees. Yea, conſidering what human nature ever has been, we may ſafely conclude, in ſuch a caſe, their love would have changed into hatred; and that they would have curſed him, with their bitter curſes, for deceiving them. Yet, how different was their conduct? Their hearts burned with love to Jeſus and his cauſe; and nothing could ſtay them from his work.—Having received the promiſed comforter, they boldly affirmed that Jeſus is the Chriſt, and was riſen from the dead—that they had ſeen and handled him, and converſed with him, and knew he was the very ſame whom they had ſeen crucified.

To all this, the ſcribes and prieſts could make no reply, but the pitiful tale, "while the ſoldiers ſlept, his diſciples came and ſtole him away." How ſilly! How perverſe! The ſoldiers were placed there, by the governor's order, to watch the tomb, which was made faſt and ſealed. It was a caſe of high importance; and for the ſoldiers to fall aſleep, ſubjected them to death by the law.—But how could they know, what was done by the diſciples, while they ſlept? Had the body been ſo taken away, the prieſts would have been the firſt to demand the execution of the law on the ſoldiers. This tale is an implicit acknowledgment, that they believed the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt. Thus far, as in view of Chriſt's pretenſions to divinity and the Meſſiahſhip; and his promiſes to the apoſtles, they could have had no motive to deceive; and had they not known he was riſen, it would have been highly their intereſt to deny his reſurrection.

Again, had not the apoſtles certain knowledge of the reſurrection of Chriſt, they could not, reaſonably, have expected any ſuc-

ceſs in their miniſtry. To ſuppoſe that twelve indigent and illiterate men, in their own ſtrength, without any civil or eccleſiaſtical power, or any popular influence, would attempt to bring in a new religion among a people, founded in the name and power of a poor, deſpiſed Galilean, whom they had juſt before put to death, under the accuſation of blaſphemy; and to do this, in oppoſition to all the power, wealth, learning, pride, prejudices and paſſions of mankind, is the moſt extravagant chimera, that ever entered into the head or heart of man! No men endowed with common ſenſe and feelings would have ventured on ſuch a taſk, unleſs, they poſitively knew, that the Saviour they preached, was a living and Almighty Saviour. The whole depended on the certainty of Chriſt's reſurrection: If he was not riſen they could not hope in him; and, without him, they could do nothing. They could not have introduced the goſpel ſyſtem, to the overthrow of the Moſaic diſpenſation, and heathen idolatry, except the things they teſtified of Jeſus were true. Men would not have renounced the religion of their fathers, for another, more ſtrict and ſelf-denying, unleſs they had ſtrong proof of its truth and divinity.

The facts, on which the goſpel ſyſtem is founded, were public; and the apoſtles conſtantly appealed to the Jews for the truth of them, even of the reſurrection of Chriſt. St. Paul, in his firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians, not only aſſerts this doctrine, but affirms, that Chriſt was repeatedly ſeen of his apoſtles and others after his reſurrection; and at one time, of above five hundred, of whom, the greater part, i. e. more than 250 were then alive at the time of his writing. Corinth was full of Jews, who, by their cabals and riotous behaviour, had, ſome time before, obliged the apoſtle to quit the city. They hated Chriſtianity and the apoſtle, and would, doubtleſs, examine his letter with ſeverity; and ruin him and his cauſe if they could. This was an appeal to his enemies; and, certainly, he had too much ſenſe, to give them an opportunity to convict him of lying, out of his own letter. As his appeal was made to more than 250 living witneſſes, and in the preſence of his enemies, it was eaſy to convict him of falſehood, and it would have been done, had not his appeal been well founded.

Such evidence muſt ſtrike the mind of every honeſt man with irreſiſtible force. Accordingly, the apoſtles had ſucceſs in their preaching, notwithſtanding their enemies had all the power, wealth, learning, religious habits and prejudices on their ſide. Upon ſuch public evidence and ſuch public appeals, they entered on their miſſion; and through the aids of the Holy Spirit, they had ſucceſs againſt all oppoſition.—This ſhows they had no mind to deceive; and, as they appealed to a cloud of witneſſes, both friends and enemies, they could not have done it.

I obſerve once more, the apoſtles had no mind to deceive in the caſe of Chriſt's reſurrection; otherwiſe, they muſt have acted as other impoſtors, and conſulted their own perſonal or family emolument, ſuch as ſocial comforts, honors and worldly gain.—But it does not appear they had any motive of this kind, even admitting their teſtimony to be true; and much leſs, if falſe. There was no popularity to be expected, for a few

indigent and ignorant fiſhermen, by preaching a deſpiſed and crucified Saviour; and a ſyſtem of religion, mortifying to all the natural paſſions and affections of ſoul and body—a religion, which condemns the luſts of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye, and pride of life; and dooms to endleſs perdition all unbelievers. Impoſtors, without learning, power and authority, would never have taken ſuch a method to obtain popularity, honors and riches. It is the reverſe of all worldly wiſdom; and contrary to the known practice of all deceivers. It is the direct way to ſhame, pain and ſorrow, poverty and death.

Accordingly, Chriſt taught his apoſtles, and indeed all his diſciples, that they muſt leave all for his ſake, and look to the rewards of another world for their recompence. He warned them, that for his ſake they ſhould be hated of the world, perſecuted, impriſoned, ſcourged and killed. And, of the truth of theſe they could not doubt, for, before his crucifixion, they had often experienced the contempt, hatred and malice of the Jews; and well knew, that they who had called the maſter of the houſe Beelzebub, and killed him, would not ſpare his followers.—Such was the caſe, even admitting the truth of their teſtimony; but if that was not true, no reaſonable motive of action can be aſſigned. They were ſure to meet with ſhame, poverty and death in this world, and had no hope of any recompence in the world to come. No men, in their ſenſes, will act thus in ſupport of what they know, or have reaſon to believe a falſehood. The conſequence therefore, irreſiſtably forces itſelf upon us, that the Apoſtles were honeſt men, that they actually knew Jeſus Chriſt was riſen from the dead, and believed that he would direct and proſper them according to his word. All their miniſtry, all their hope for time and eternity depended on the truth of Chriſt's reſurrection. Upon *this* they ventured every thing, and gave up all for the ſake of Chriſt, not counting their own lives dear, ſo they might win him and his righteouſneſs.

Notwithſtanding all oppoſition and every diſcouragement, the Apoſtles went forth boldly, preaching Chriſt, and ſalvation by him alone. Knowing he was alive from the dead, they believed in his promiſed aid, and with great power witneſſed his reſurrection. They were both the recipients and active inſtruments of miraculous operations; and, hereby, proved their divine miſſion and authority. In aſſurance of this, they entered on their miſſion; and ſpent their whole time in publiſhing the glad tidings of the goſpel, without a proſpect of worldly gain. They attacked the numerous ſuperſtitions and traditions of the elders—affirmed that Chriſt, whom they had crucified, was the Lord of Life, and only Saviour of loſt men—called on them to repent of their ſins, and believe on him for ſalvation, appealing to themſelves for the truth of the facts which they teſtified of Jeſus; and finally denounced damnation on all who ſhould continue in impenitency and unbelief. In a word, through the evident operations of the Holy Spirit, and in virtue of their divine miſſion, they attacked and overturned the Jewiſh economy, and the idolatrous worſhip of moſt of the heathen world.

In theſe labors, the Apoſtles gained neither popularity, honors,

or riches; but that the work might ſtand in the power of God, and not of men, they paſſed thro' fiery trials and cruel mocking, both from Jews and Gentiles. And finally, moſt, if not all of them ſealed their teſtimony of Jeſus by a violent death, and thus drank of the cup of their maſter. Theſe things ſhow that the Apoſtles were neither deceived nor deceivers: We muſt therefore receive the doctrine of the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt, as an eſtabliſhed fact.

The enemies of the croſs have made many objections to the teſtimony of the Apoſtles; moſt of them are frivolous and abſurd cavils, totally unworthy of notice. I do not, at preſent, recollect any objection of conſequence, to the above reaſoning, unleſs it be this eant phraſe of modern deiſm, viz. "That all this teſtimony is an after-game—a mere farce, trumped up by bigoted and deſigning prieſts."

As it is not ſuppoſable that Jewiſh or heathen idolatrous prieſts would trump up ſuch a ſyſtem againſt themſelves, we muſt conclude they mean Chriſtian prieſts. This being the caſe, it is abundantly ſufficient to mention their objection, and paſs it in ſilence, until they will be pleaſed to ſhow how there could have been Chriſtian prieſts, before Chriſtianity commenced—who they were—where they lived—where they met—and when they wrote. When they will honeſtly anſwer theſe queries, we will attend to them.

The death and reſurrection of Chriſt are facts as well atteſted, as any other facts in hiſtory of equal diſtance of time. They have all the proof that any fact can have from the teſtimony of men, after the witneſſes are dead. Let us not reject the teſtimony of others, like Thomas, till we ſhall ſee Jeſus with our eyes—*Bleſſed are they that have not ſeen, and yet have believed.*

It was obſerved in the beginning of this Eſſay, that on the truth of the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt, depends the uſe of the means of ſalvation and the reſurrection of the dead. If Chriſt be riſen, then our dead bodies muſt and will ariſe: So ſaid the Apoſtle, "If it be preached that he roſe from the dead, how ſay ſome among you, there is no reſurrection of the dead." The reſurrection of Chriſt was a pledge of the reſurrection of our bodies: He was the *firſt fruits of them that ſlept. For, ſince by man came death, by man alſo came the reſurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Chriſt the firſt fruits; afterwards they that are Chriſt's at his coming.* The reſurrection of Chriſt is an aſſurance of the reſurrection of all men, but eſpecially of his ſaints; they ſhall ariſe to glory and immortality. As the firſt fruits, under the law, were a pledge of the future harveſt, ſo the reſurrection of Chriſt was an earneſt of their reſurrection: If the head be raiſed, the members will aſſuredly follow. The church of Chriſt was virtually raiſed with him; and will actually follow in their order. And as aſſurance of this, we read, that *the graves were opened, and many bodies of the ſaints which ſlept aroſe, and came out of the graves after his reſurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.* This teaches us that Jeſus Chriſt is, indeed, *the reſurrection and the life.* And from what he has done, we

may ſafely argue to what he will do; and be aſſured, that *the hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves ſhall hear his voice and come forth; they that have done good unto the reſurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the reſurrection of damnation.*

This doctrine of Chriſt's reſurrection, is a doctrine of comfort to believers. They look forward to the time when their bodies ſhall put on incorruption, and their mortal, immortality; and be faſhioned like his glorious body.

The meeting of righteous ſouls with their bodies, will be a glorious meeting! How happy will they be to meet their bodies, delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the liberty of the ſons of God! How will the ſoul rejoice, to be reunited to that tongue, which uſed to expreſs its delight in God, and ſing the praiſes of redeeming love—to thoſe hands, which uſed to be raiſed, in adoration and ſupplication to the Supreme Being, and extended in charity to man—to thoſe eyes and ears, which were once opened to the word of life—to thoſe knees, which often bowed before the throne of grace—and to thoſe feet that weekly bore the ſoul to the houſe of God? I ſay, how inexpreſſibly happy will be the ſoul and body, when they ſhall again be united at the reſurrection, never more to part; but mutually to enjoy, love and worſhip the triune God forever and ever! Let the righteous take comfort in the promiſes of Chriſt; and wait patiently for his coming, with aſſurance, that when he, who is the reſurrection and the life, ſhall appear, they ſhall be like him.

But how different will be the caſe with the wicked! They will ariſe to condemnation. And their union to their bodies will doubtleſs increaſe their miſery.

Surely it is not ſtrange, that the ſophiſts of this world, and obſtinate ſinners, are exerting every nerve to diſprove the bible, and eſpecially the doctrine of the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt. For if that be true, they well know the bible muſt be true, and that a day of judgment will come;—a day of unutterable woe and miſery to them.—But, the evidence of the reſurrection of Chriſt is ſtrong and concluſive, as has been ſhewn. It has ſupported the doctrine, for almoſt 1800 years, againſt all the art and ſophiſtry of wicked men; and never can be overſet, while the teſtimony of man has weight with men.

How ſhould theſe conſiderations excite all of us to the diligent uſe of the means of ſalvation? We have now an opportunity to prepare for the reſurrection of life. *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the dead.* In him, we look for new heavens and a new earth—In him, we look forward to eternal rewards, or endleſs puniſhments, according to the deeds done in the body.

This conſideration gives a reaſonable ground for the uſe of means; our preaching is not vain in the Lord. An eternity, my readers, an eternity of happineſs or miſery will follow upon this life; our good or evil improvement of time and the means of ſalvation, will determine our portion. In this life, and in this only, we have opportunity to ſecure a part in the reſurrection of the juſt. This renders the wiſe and

diligent uſe of appointed means, infinitely important to every ſon and daughter of Adam. Let us then ſtrive to know Chriſt, and the power of his reſurrection—Let us be ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; foraſmuch as we know that our labor is not in vain in the Lord.

ISRAEL.

On the eleventh chapter of the Revelation.

MESS'RS EDITORS,

Some of your readers having expreſſed a particular deſire to ſee an expoſition of the 11th chapter of the Revelation, I ſend you the following, which if you judge worthy, you will pleaſe to give a place in your excellent Magazine.

PART I.

PREVIOUS to the propoſed explanation, permit ſome general introductory remarks upon the prophecy contained in the Revelation. The compoſition of this book is univerſally aſcribed to the apoſtle John; but chronologers diſagree about the date of it. Some ſuppoſe it was written in the reign of Domitian, the Roman emperor. Biſhop *Newton* gives it an earlier date, ſuppoſing it to have been written in the reign of Nero, that he might conſiſtently apply the opening of the firſt ſeal, or the viſion of the white horſe and his victorious rider, to the Roman emperors, *Veſpaſian* and *Titus*, with particular reference to their conqueſt of Judea; ſuppoſing it would have been abſurd to make this application, if he admitted, that it was written in the reign of Domitian, as this would make it an hiſtory of paſt, rather than a prophecy of future events. Omitting remarks reſpecting the date of the book, this ſubject is introduced for the purpoſe of ſubmitting the following queſtion to the candid conſideration of your learned readers, whether it be abſurd, and contrary to ſcripture precedent, to ſuppoſe the Revelation written in the reign of Domitian, and yet apply the viſion of the white horſe and his rider, to Veſpaſian and Titus? According to which it would be the repreſentation of an event which exiſted thirty or forty years, before it was exhibited in the viſion. On this ſubject let only ſcripture example be conſulted. The prophet Daniel had a viſion, chap. 7. of four beaſts; the firſt of which is interpreted to ſignify the Babyloniſh empire, but this viſion was in the reign of Belſhazzar, the laſt of its kings, and in whoſe reign that empire was ſubdued.—The events which were compriſed in this viſion, muſt conſequently, have generally exiſted a longer ſpace of time before the prophet had this viſion, than Veſpaſian and Titus lived before Domitian. Beſides, the rapidity and extent of conqueſt, or that elevated ſtate repreſented by the eagle's wings which the lion had, was not effected by Belſhazzar, a luxurious and effeminate prince; but by his great predeceſſor, Nebuchadnezzar.—So the apoſtle had a viſion, chap. 12, of a great red dragon, and chap. 13. of a beaſt coming up out of the ſea, which viſions are interpreted to denote the Roman empire. But if this beaſt which the apoſtle ſaw, having ſeven heads and ten horns, repreſented the Roman empire, with the different forms of government under which it had ſubſiſted, from the firſt commencement of it, of which it is ſaid, *five*

are fallen, it certainly repreſented many and great events which exiſted long before the days of the apoſtle; yea, by far the moſt intereſting and important events which exiſted in it, through the whole term of its duration; it being a much longer term from the riſe of it to the days of the apoſtle, than from the reign of Domitian, or even Nero, to the diſſolution of the *old* Roman empire by the northern nations—a period alſo, in which with its great iron teeth, (it being the fourth terrible beaſt of Daniel) it had broken in pieces and ſubdued the beaſts which were before it—in which it had diſplayed its national policy, the military proweſs and conqueſts of its arms—and in which it had paſſed the zenith of its power and glory. According to theſe remarks, biſhop Newton might have conceded, that the apoſtle wrote the Revelation in the reign of Domitian, and yet have applied the viſion of the white horſe and him that ſat thereon to Veſpaſian and Titus, and ſupported the propriety of it by ſcripture precedents and example.

If it be enquired, does not this ſubject the ſcripture to the imputation of abſurdity? It may be replied, perhaps not; for theſe are not of the nature of ſimple prophecies; but ſymbolic repreſentations of important events, or particular great ſcenes of divine providence: and is it not as proper to make ſuch a diſplay, in the middle, or at the end, as at the beginning of the ſcene? When the Babyloniſh empire was to be repreſented by a lion with eagle's wings, why was it not as proper to make this repreſentation to Daniel, near its deſtruction; as when it was to be repreſented by an head of gold, to make this diſplay to Nebuchadnezzar, near the commencement of it? In like manner, why was it not as conſiſtent to repreſent to the apoſtle, in the reign of Domitian, that ſcheme of events which commenced in the conqueſts of Veſpaſian and Titus, by a book ſealed with ſeven ſeals, as to repreſent the Babyloniſh empire when a much greater ſcheme commenced in Nebuchadnezzar, to Daniel, by a lion, in the reign of Belſhazzar? Or even to repreſent the Roman empire itſelf by a beaſt dreadful and terrible, and having great iron teeth, when that empire had been founded by Romulus, ſome generations, if not centuries, before the prophet had this viſion of it?* Conſidering the book which the apoſtle ſaw in the viſion, as containing that ſeries of events which commenced about his time, relating immediately to the Roman empire, by the opening of the ſeals, and the ſymbolic appearances conſequent upon it, we have diſcloſed to us, the wars, famines and peſtilences, by which God puniſhed the idolatrous perſecutors of his people, until in his holy providence, the empire by a great revolution became Chriſtian. We have, Chap. 7. repreſented, by the angel's holding the winds that they ſhould not blow, and the ſealing of the ſervants of God in their foreheads, that peaceful and proſperous ſtate of the church which ſucceeded the converſion of the empire from heatheniſm to Chriſtianity. We have next, Chap. 8. on the opening of the ſeventh ſeal, a viſion of ſeven angels with ſeven trumpets prepared to ſound.

* Suppoſing the Roman empire to have been founded in the reign of Joaſh king of Judah, it was more than 300 years before the prophet had this viſion of it.

By the ſounding of the four firſt, with their effects, are ſignified, the calamities with which God puniſhed the hereſies of the Chriſtian empire, and the extinction of it by the irruptions of the barbarous nations. In the concluſion of theſe, we have an angel flying thro' the midſt of heaven, and proclaiming woe, woe, woe, to the inhabiters of the earth and ſea, portending the dreadful calamities which would ſucceed the ſounding of the three remaining trumpets. We then have, Chap. 9. the ſounding of the fifth trumpet, which conſtituted the firſt woe, upon which a ſtar fell from heaven, the bottomleſs pit was opened, and the ſmoke of it aſcended, filled with locuſts; denoting the impoſture of Mahomet, the ſpread of his deluſion, and the conqueſts and cruelties of his followers the Saracens or Arabians, by which God chaſtiſed the corruptions and ſuperſtitions of the Chriſtian church —but not reformed by theſe judgments, we have the deſtruction of the eaſtern empire repreſented by the ſixth trumpet and ſecond woe, or the looſing of the four angels which were bound by the river Euphrates, i. e. the removal of thoſe obſtructions which impeded the progreſs of the *Turks*, and giving them opportunity to purſue and extend their conqueſts, by which they ſubdued the eaſtern or Greek empire, and eſtabliſhed themſelves upon its ruins. Theſe viſions being completed, the apoſtle then had a viſion of a mighty angel with a little book, which, according to direction, he took and ate, remarking, that in his mouth it was ſweet as honey, but in his belly it was bitter—ſignifying, that however pleaſant and agreeable theſe revelations of future events relating to the church were, in their completion they would be painful and diſtreſſing. We come now to the propoſed ſubject, an explanation of the eleventh chapter. As this is an obſcure part of holy ſcripture, the preſent expoſitor is ſenſible, that for him, an unuſual degree of diffidence is peculiarly proper; without deciding therefore upon any ſubject, he will only ſubmit his general view of it to the conſideration of the candid and judicious.—This chapter is underſtood by all expoſitors to conſiſt of the contents of the book, which biſhop Newton concludes with the 13th verſe; the reſt of the chapter being a continuation of the viſions contained in chapter ninth. Concerning this little book, admit the two following general conjectures.

1. May it not be conſidered as a prophetic repreſentation of events, collateral with the preceding viſions and predictions? From the commencement of the prophetic viſions, or the opening of the ſeals, Chap. 6. to the concluſion of the ninth chapter, we have a progreſſive ſeries of viſions, denoting future events. If, according to commentators, the opening of the ſeals, and the ſounding of the four firſt trumpets related to the empire, we ſhall find theſe prophecies fulfilled within the firſt ſix hundred years of the Chriſtian era. If we apply the fifth or firſt woe trumpet, to the Mahometan, and the ſecond woe trumpet to the Turk, it will bring down the ſeries of events to the ſeventeenth century. And the fifth and ſixth trumpets will include the extended period of more than one thouſand years. It is now to be obſerved, that theſe diſtreſſing ſcenes were chiefly opened on the eaſtern empire; and the ſuperſtition and voluptuouſneſs of the

Greek church particularly were chaſtiſed by the wars, cruelties and mercileſs exactions, of the Saracens; and ſimilar diſtreſſes with the extinction of the empire by the Turks, were confined to it almoſt entirely. In theſe viſions no proper notice is taken, only a general hint given of the defection of the weſtern church, by "The *reſt* of the men repented not." There are no diſtinct repreſentations of the blaſphemy, arrogance, cruelties and perſecutions of the man of ſin. Neither are there any repreſentations of the faith, ſufferings and patience of thoſe who kept the commandments of God, or the true church, for the extended period of one thouſand years. Why might not the ſpirit of inſpiration, on the one hand, to preſerve the chain of events, continue the viſions? And on the other, to expoſe ſuch intereſting ſubjects, give the apoſtle the little book, as a ſummary of them, and which, if I underſtand its contents, related wholly to them, as a collateral prophecy? So, as the church was divided into the Geeek or eaſtern, and the Latin or weſtern church, and God's providence extended to each; as in the two trumpets we have the riſe and propagation of the fatal deluſion of Mahomet, and the calamities with which God puniſhed the ſuperſtition, formality and vices of the eaſtern church, by the Saracens and Turks, ſo in the little book, we have the blaſphemy and perſecutions of antichriſt and the ſufferings of God's faithful ſervants in the weſtern church. Is it not a confirmation of this conjecture, that there is ſuch a parallel in their dates, the ſpread of Mahometiſm, and the confirmed aſcendency of the biſhop of Rome commencing about the ſame time, and that each will probably terminate about the ſame period? According to this hypotheſis, we have the Revelation divided into two parts, from the fourth to the ſeventh trumpet. One part conſiſting of the fifth and ſixth trumpets, containing the viſions or prophecy of the Saracens and Turks. The other conſiſting of the little book, containing a prophecy of antichriſtian idolatry, and the ſufferings of God's people from it; after which the ſyſtem of viſions is renewed by the ſeventh trumpet, and continued to the end.

2. May not this little book be conſidered as an introduction to the ſeventh trumpet, and a ſummary of the ſubſequent viſions relating to antichriſt? If the judgments which conſtitute the third woe, be not inflicted upon antichriſt, we know not where to find them. If they were to be inflicted upon him, without any previous information of him, the ſcene would have commenced very abruptly, and be involved in great obſcurity. To ſupercede theſe effects, we have the viſion, making a conciſe diſplay of him, and his enormous wickedneſs, as the procuring cauſe of theſe terrible calamities, by which the whole proceſs of divine providence is made plain, and the infliction of theſe judgments naturally introduced. May we not alſo conſider it as a ſummary of the ſubſequent viſions which relate to this ſubject? Will it not probably appear, upon examination, that the following viſions contained in the Revelation, relating to antichriſt and the witneſſes, are bnt ſo many expoſitory lectures making a full diſplay of them, of which this viſion in the eleventh chapter furniſhed the ſeveral texts? If this

be juſt, is there not a great ſimilarity between the prophecy of Daniel, and the viſions of the apoſtle John? Firſt, Nebuchadnezzar, Chap. 2. ſaw a great image in his dream, compoſed of four different materials, which were interpreted to ſignify four great empires which ſhould riſe, be broken in pieces and ſucceeded by the kingdom of Chriſt. Then Daniel Chap. 7. had a viſion of four beaſts, which were interpreted to ſignify the ſame four empires, but many ſubjects were diſcloſed in this viſion, relating eſpecially to the fourth, which were inveloped in the image. So he had another viſion Chap. 8. of a ram and an he goat which repreſented the ſecond and third of thoſe empires, and another viſion Chap. 10. diſcloſing many particulars relating to them, eſpecially to the third, which were unnoticed in the preceding viſion, and by which the great revolutions to be effected in divine providence, with the diverſified ſcenes of the church to the end of the world, were exhibited to the aſtoniſhed and fainting prophet; but all the viſions or predictions, contained in the book, were ſummarily compriſed in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar and in the viſion of the four beaſts. So the ſubſequent viſions, contained in the Revelation, are ſuppoſed to be only varied views of the ſeveral ſubjects exhibited in this eleventh chapter.

Hoping theſe obſervations introduce the propoſed ſubject, I ſhall in my next number attempt to give a true explanation of the chapter: and as it is apprehended that general remarks will be leaſt exceptionable and moſt to edification, ſuch only will be made.

PEREGRINUS.

(To be continued.)

TO THE EDITORS OF THE CONNECTICUT EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE.

GENTLEMEN,

I HAVE been led to view the narratives of religious revivals, with which you have favored the public, in your Magazine, as ſtanding among the more important things which compoſe that valuable work. By theſe, Zion has been comforted, and the enemy confounded. Religion comes more forcibly recommended to the mind from example, than precept. There is a certain life in the former, that is not in the latter. This no doubt is the reaſon why the book of God is ſo interſperſed with accounts of this nature. In characters, we are taught the nature of virtue and vice from exerciſe and action; the mind in this caſe, is not perplexed with a chain of theoretic reaſoning, but called to look on facts. For theſe reaſons, I am a friend to all ſuch publications, whether in a greater or leſs degree extraordinary. Compared with other accounts, which you have received, I have little to ſay, yet on the ſcore of ſovereign grace, and the almighty power of the divine ſpirit, in ſubduing the ſinner, I have much to ſay. I can bear the ſame teſtimony with thoſe that have labored in a larger field, that, with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.

In the year 1781, it pleaſed God to revive his work among us; a ſpecial attention and uncommon ſerioufneſs, ſeemed to prevail in all parts of the ſociety; and the happy effects for many years were ſenſibly felt. At that ſeaſon, there were upwards of thirty added to the church. After that, there was nothing ſpecial

took place, except in individual caſes, for twenty years. During which period, the ſpirit of vital religion was reduced to a very languid ſtate. This will ever be the caſe without freſh anointings from the ſpirit.

Toward the latter end of March in the year 1801, two or three pious people agreed to meet and pray for a revival of religion among us. This was ſoon diſcovered, and others joined.—The numbers increaſed weekly, and in the May and June following, our meetings became crowded, and the ſpirit of God in the conviction of a number, was evidently ſeen among us. A public lecture was appointed, in which I was favored with the kind aſſiſtance of my brethren in the miniſtry. Our conferences were attended three or four times in the week; but the moſt crowded, and that which diſcovered moſt of the power of the ſpirit, was on Thurſday in the afternoon. During this period, religion appeared not to be a ſecondary object, but the one thing needful. Sabbaths ſeemed too far diſtant, and the appointed ſeaſons of conference were waited for with anticipated delight. The work however, was far from being general among the people. There were ſome from almoſt every part of the ſociety; and ſome families ſo peculiarly diſtinguiſhed, that it might almoſt be ſaid of them, as of the favored houſe at which our Lord, when in the fleſh, ſo often called, that they were all friends to Jeſus. To the ſerious, contemplative mind, there was a ſtriking diſplay of the ſovereign, diſcriminating grace of God. While one family was wholly occupied with the concerns of the ſoul, perhaps a few rods at the next door, nothing of it was to be ſeen; they were wholly unmoved, unleſs with a ſpirit of oppoſition. "The wind bloweth where it liſteth, and thou heareſt the ſound thereof, but canſt not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: ſo is every one that is born of the ſpirit." God works like himſelf; whatever courſe he takes in his providence, or wherever he rides in the goſpel chariot, the moſt viſible effects of ſovereignty mark his way; confirming his own declaration—"And ye ſhall know that I am the Lord."

It may be noticed, that between theſe revivals, there had ariſen a new generation, and among theſe was the principal ſucceſs of the work. Thoſe who had come to years of underſtanding before, and refuſed the offers of mercy, were generally unmoved. And ſhould God in ſome after period again revive his work among us, it may be likely ſo with thoſe that are now left. The idea comes ſolemnly addreſſed to all, among whom the ſpirit of God is moving, leſt preſuming on a more convenient ſeaſon, like Felix, they neglect the accepted time, and no place in after life be found for repentance. "Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone."

The work, in its early ſtage, took deep hold of profeſſors. They ſeemed to awake as from ſleep, and the proſperity of Zion was the object of their united prayers. Love to one another, and zeal for the cauſe animated them, with but a few exceptions. The ſtill ſmall voice, has characterized the work from the beginning, without any thing of an oppoſite nature.

Among the new converts, an uncommon degree of caution appeared to lead the way to their

profeſſion. They ſeemed to come trembling, leſt they might diſhonor that holy religion, which they had been led to view, above every thing elſe, precious. Our number of admiſſions to the communion of the church has been thirty five, and from a judgment of charity, it is expected that there may be ſtill an addition.

It has been viewed by the friends of Zion as matter of thankfulneſs, that nothing exceptionable has been found in the lives of our new converts. Their walk has diſcovered that meek, humble ſpirit peculiar to the goſpel. However, we have had oppoſition from the beginning; it has aſſumed different ſhapes and ariſen from different and unexpected quarters. The reſult of which has been, that the line is more viſibly drawn, and Chriſt's little flock, to the eye of common obſervation, more clearly diſtinguiſhed.

There were ſeveral inſtances among the ſubjects of the work, ſomewhat peculiar; but as I have already exceeded my deſigned limits, I ſhall mention but one. This was in a man of about middle life, with a ſmall family. In the view of human reaſon, he was perhaps as unpromiſing a ſubject as any among us. But, in the early period of the work, his attention was arreſted—his convictions were deep, and they continued long, till his friends began to be anxious what might be the event. I had ſeveral times, after worſhip, as we traveled a ſmall diſtance the ſame way, deſignedly fell in his company. This I did the Sabbath before he met with comfort. As ſoon as we came together, I aſked him what were the exerciſes of his mind? He replied, that every time he came to the houſe of God, he came hoping that he ſhould return with a better heart; but he grew worſe and worſe, till he was led to imagine that there was no mercy for him. It ſeems, ſays he, when I have taken one ſtep, as if the next would plunge me into irretrievable deſtruction. I was moved at the converſation, at the ſame time told him I entertained a hope that his preſent diſtreſs might be ſoon removed. He replied with a degree of ſurpriſe in his countenance, can you think that there is any mercy for ſuch a wretch as I am? I told him, was he a ten thouſand times greater wretch than he was, there was mercy enough in the goſpel. On this we parted.—A few days after, his views and exerciſes were wholly different, and his joy was as extreme as his ſorrow. Nor was it temporary, as is ſometimes the caſe; but his tongue has ever ſince been looſed in praiſe of that merciful hand, that raiſed him from the horrible pit; conſidering his caſe a remarkable inſtance of ſovereign grace.

There is nothing that will more readily take hold of the chriſtian's feelings, than to ſee a fellow ſinner trembling under the deep convictions of the law. With regard to the event, the uncertainty is ſo great, and the importance ſo vaſt, that the paſſions of hope and fear are wrought up to the higheſt key. And when the iſſue is happy, and the ſinner hopefully bro't into God's ſpiritual family, there is nothing that will excite in the chriſtian more unfeigned praiſe. He will feel diſpoſed in this caſe, if ever, to ſtrike that high note of the Pſalmiſt, and call even upon inanimate nature to join the ſong,—"Praiſe ye the Lord. Praiſe ye the Lord from the hea-

vens; praiſe him in the heights. Praiſe ye him all his angels; praiſe ye him all his hoſts. Praiſe ye him ſun and moon; praiſe him, all ye ſtars of light. Praiſe him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that are above the heavens. Let every thing that hath breath praiſe the Lord."

I am, gentlemen, your brother in the common cauſe,

THOMAS BROCKWAY.

Lebanon (ſecond ſociety),
January 6, 1803.

MESS'RS EDITORS,

Among the numerous and various claſſes of the readers of your uſeful Magazine, and who from month to month wait impatiently for its ſucceſſive numbers, are the ſickly and infirm. The writer is acquainted with a number of perſons of this deſcription, who are unable to read or attend to long diſcourſes or eſſays, but in the courſe of the month read again and again, the ſhort eſſays, expoſitions, narratives, biographical ſketches, and other intereſting pieces contained in the numbers of the Magazine. By theſe they are not only inſtructed and edified, but greatly animated and cheered in their ſpirits—and find a ſubſtitute, better than they can elſewhere find, except in the inſpired writings, for the bleſſings and advantages of the ſocial, public worſhip of God in his houſe, of which they are deprived. This is doubtleſs, a claſs of readers which claims the occaſional attention of thoſe who write, or extract, for the Magazine. With a view to add to the number and variety of ſhort pieces, adapted to the circumſtances of ſuch, and not unworthy the attention of others, I ſend herewith a few lines, written by an acquaintance and friend—a Lady, who had been often in the ſchool of affliction, and was, at the time of writing them, laboring under great bodily infirmities. The deſign of them appears to have been to animate and comfort her own mind, under the preſſure of afflictions, by turning her tho'ts on God and the things of his kingdom: Particularly his holy, wiſe, and eternal counſels—his univerſal and particular Providence—and the infinite glory which will redound to God, and the inconceivable happineſs which will be enjoyed in his kingdom in the iſſue of the glorious work of redemption. A conſideration of theſe things, as they are exhibited in the word of God, may well afford conſolation to the minds of his children, whether burdened with perſonal troubles and ſorrows, or pained with a view of the ſufferings of others, and the iniquities and various evils which fill the world. It tends to impreſs the mind with a ſenſe of the vanity of ſublunary things—the nothingneſs of creatures in compariſon with God and the intereſts of his kingdom, and the propriety of adding, when praying for deliverance from any particular evil, or the beſtowment of any ſuppoſed particular good, "Not my will, but thine be done." Yours, &c.

P. H.

Contemplations in Sickneſs.

I BELIEVE that the all wiſe Diſpoſer of events had a conſiſtent plan of operation before creation began; ſo that he knows no more of me or my circumſtances now, and will not, thouſands of years hence, than he knew before the commencement of time. This great plan includes the creation of angels and men—the fall

of a part of the angelic hoſt—the apoſtacy of man—the great work of redemption—and every volition and action conſequent on thoſe great events. It includes every event, great or ſmall, that ever has or ever will take place in the ſyſtem. It is certain alſo, that infinite wiſdom and infinite goodneſs have choſen the *beſt poſſible plan.* As the human body is compoſed of veins, arteries, nerves and fibres, ſo this great plan is compoſed of an infinite variety of events, which I have no doubt will eventually all harmonize (however blind mortals may judge of appearances to the contrary), and become ſuch a great *whole* as ſhall redound to the higheſt poſſible glory to the three perſons in the ſacred Trinity, and the moſt conſummate, inconceivable happineſs to every individual of the redeemed, and of all holy beings. With reſpect to myſelf, I am but a ſmall ſpeck of exiſtence when compared to the great whole; yet my exiſtence, with every circumſtance of it, is important as a part of the great plan; and it was that God might be glorified in the ſalvation, or final, juſt condemnation of ſuch little, vile and otherwiſe inſignificant creatures, that the great Redeemer took on him our nature and made complete atonement for ſin. Now when I deſire any good for myſelf, as eaſe from pain—reſtoration to health and uſefulneſs—the life, health and happineſs of thoſe who are dear to me, or my own eternal ſalvation—when I deſire to become a member of the glorious and holy family of God in heaven, and enjoy the light, the bright viſion of Deity in the face of the glorified Saviour, and go no more out of his preſence, but join and continue with all my dear friends in praiſing him who loved us and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood, and know that we ſhall be ſafe from all danger of offending him, *forever*—(O how inexpreſſibly deſirable!) When I deſire any or all theſe things, I may know and be aſſured that they will be beſtowed by infinite wiſdom and goodneſs, if it is conſiſtent with this *beſt poſſible plan.* But if it is not, and there could be ſuch a thing as my being admitted among the bleſſed, or enjoying any deſirable earthly good, inconſiſtent with the beſt good of the whole, it would argue imperfection in God to grant it—It would be a blot in the divine character—introduce diſcord into the ſyſtem, and deſtroy that perfect harmony which conſtitutes happineſs.—It becomes me to rejoice that the Lord reigns and is infinitely wiſe, juſt and good, and to ſubmit cheerfully to all his diſpenſations, as being a part of that great divine plan which will redound to the divine glory and the greateſt poſſible good. I am a ſhort ſighted creature, a ſinful worm of the duſt. I know not what is beſt for myſelf, or for the glory of God. But I know all things will work together for good to them that love God, and place their happineſs in his glory. I deſire therefore to learn this bleſſed leſſon from the Son of God, not to deſire any thing from the hand of God which is not conſiſtent with his own glory and his wiſe, eternal plan. And when I pray that the cup of affliction may paſs from me, I deſire to ſay, *not my will but thine be done.*

January, 1803.

A Funeral Meditation.

WE are often called to houſes of affliction—to the

bedſide of the ſick and dying, and to attend the funeral ſolemnities of the deceaſed. Decency, friendſhip and relation collect many on ſuch occaſions, who have little deſire to attend on ſerious things, and are very uncomfortable when they are urged upon them. They hate thoſe ſights of diſtreſs, which excite reflection. The houſes of ſickneſs and mourning are no places for them, for they bring eternity and its great ſolemnities into view, which are but unwelcome and uncomfortable tho'ts. Scenes of buſineſs, mirth and feſtivity, are more deſirable; theſe ſuit their hearts, ſtifle reflections, and keep off thought. Their viſits to places which bring futurity into view, are as ſeldom and ſhort as decency will permit. Such views produce a chilling horror; they ſhrink back from the ideas. No cheering comforts, no ſweet conſolations refreſh their ſpirits, drawn from the ennobling contemplations of eternity, and the intereſting ſcenes which enrapture the mind earneſtly fixed on the inviſible world.

Others equally hate the diſſipation of thought, produced by feſtivity and mirth. Serious ſcenes are more welcome, inſpire richer entertainment, and fix the mind upon ſubjects which never cloy. "The heart of the wiſe is in the houſe of mourning: but the heart of the fool is in the houſe of mirth." In ſuch an houſe, things beyond this life ruſh upon almoſt every mind, whether they give comfort, or painful reflections.—The reaſon why the godly take real ſatisfaction, in being preſent on mournful occaſions, is not, as the ſons of vanity would ſuggeſt, becauſe their hearts are hard and unfeeling, and can on that account more eaſily endure ſights of anguiſh and diſtreſs. It is common for the gay to pay themſelves a compliment, they by no means deſerve, that 'their nerves were never ſufficiently hardened to endure ſuch moving ſcenes, that they excite an exquiſite ſenſibility in them, too painful to be borne.' But though they would by this caſt an oblique reflection on ſuch as take pleaſure in bearing a part with the afflicted, it is but pretence. Far other reaſons than tenderneſs and humanity drive them from ſights of wretchedneſs, to houſes of mirth and laughter; nor is it becauſe the pious are unfeeling, that they love to weep with ſuch as weep, and attend them in their deepeſt ſorrows, and contemplate with them, the things which ſuch mournful occaſions ſuggeſt to the mind.

The heart of the wiſe is in the houſe of mourning, becauſe the objects which preſent themſelves, on ſuch occaſions, are calculated to inſpire the moſt uſeful reflections. Death is the end of every thing on earth. The dead have departed to another world. The ſight of their remains impreſſes on the mind the vanity of the objects of general purſuit. We follow them in our imaginations into the inviſible ſtate: The importance of that world riſes upon our minds: We are intereſted in it, *as it reſpects our deceaſed friend.* We contemplate his ſituation: We enquire with ourſelves, where is he? What is his preſent ſtate? Is he happy or miſerable? Will his happineſs or miſery be eternal? Is he beyond hope, or above fear? What ſociety is he now in? What are his preſent employments? How does he view his paſt life, and the things of this buſy world? Our minds are carried to the word of God—the only book which fur-

niſhes us with inſtructions on this ſubject. We have new ideas of its importance, and attend to it with greater earneſtneſs. We are imperceptibly led to become intereſted in things inviſible *for ourſelves*. The world ſinks; we view ourſelves no more than pilgrims and ſtrangers here; we are impreſſed with the idea of our own departure; it is brought near. We again turn with anxious deſires for information to the only inſtructor to be had. We enquire, where ſhall we ourſelves ſoon be? What is there for us beyond this world? We take a ſerious view of the light caſt upon this ſubject, by the ſcriptures. The magnitude of the rewards and puniſhments it reveals awes our ſpirits. We earneſtly examine the grounds of juſtification, and condemnation; we examine ourſelves; we either are ſatisfied or tremble. We feel the importance of a full preparation, and the folly of delay. We are conſtrained to the reſolution, that we will attend to it immediately. Its importance ſtill riſes upon us; the vanities of the world loſe their influence; the mind is ſwallowed up in the idea of making preparation for the world, where we are to have our everlaſting home.—The houſe of mourning is certainly favorable for theſe reflections. But alas, with many, while at the place of mourning, the heart is either pining for the houſe of mirth, or ſupporting itſelf againſt ſuch natural reflections, by employing its thoughts on the countenance of the deceaſed, the conduct and appearance of the mourners, the parade of the funeral, or other things equally trifling; and their thoughts are conſtrained to wander upon any thing which may come next, to give them relief from the pain of thinking as they ought, and as the occaſion almoſt irreſiſtibly compels them to think. But if we will allow ourſelves to follow the train of thought, which is natural on ſuch an occaſion, we ſhall proceed further. The reſurrection of the dead ſmall and great, with its conſequences will turn upon our minds. We ſhall contemplate ourſelves, ſtanding in this immenſe congregation—ſhall anticipate the univerſal ſolemnity which will be impreſſed on every ſoul—ſhall contemplate all, ſtanding before God, the books opened, and the dead judged out of the things written in the books, according to their works. Our conduct in this world will then appear, O how intereſting! How ſolemn it is to be now preparing the materials for our endleſs deſtiny! The judgment which will then be paſſed, will naturally employ our thoughts, as we ſit meditating in the houſe of mourning. We are ſtruck with the idea of the unchangeable and irreverſible deciſion, which will then be given. Again we look into ourſelves—conſider our hearts and lives, and enquire, for what ſentence have we been preparing ourſelves? What portion are we to expect? Our hopes and fears preſs into view. We look forward into a profound eternity—no end, no ſhore, no period is to be even contemplated. Solemnity poſſeſſes our whole ſouls: We are intereſted. We enquire into the character of God our judge. We look about us for dependence: In ourſelves we find none. Chriſt and his ſalvation are the only things which afford any proſpect of deliverance and bleſſedneſs. We contemplate the terms of acceptance with him—we realize that we muſt have him for our Saviour, or we

are undone—undone indeed. Our ſins crowd into view—our folly and preſumption, and we ſee that an intereſt in Chriſt *muſt* be ſecured, and that till then, we riſk dangers abſolutely infinite.—Men of common prudence muſt, at an houſe of mourning, have theſe, or ſimilar reflections, if they allow themſelves to think. Theſe are welcome to the real Chriſtian—the truly wiſe man, and therefore his heart is in the houſe of mourning. But theſe are not his only thoughts.

In the houſe of mourning, the wiſe man is in an advantageous ſituation to meditate on the triumph of Chriſt, at the conſummation of all things, over all his enemies,—on his joy at ſeeing the abundant fruits of the travail of his ſoul, now prepared to enter into his preſence, and dwell with him forever. He contemplates the glory of the church, now redeemed from all ſin, riſing from the grave, victorious over all its enemies, meeting its divine Redeemer, by whom it was ranſomed from ſin and hell, entering into the joys of its Lord, filled with adoration and hymns of everlaſting praiſe, and attended by all the angels to the manſions which Chriſt has now gone to prepare for his friends. Wrapt in theſe contemplations, the glory of God appears, our ſouls are overborne with a ſenſe of his love, and of the compaſſion of Chriſt to ſuch ſinful, unworthy creatures as ourſelves. The habits of grace are ſtrengthened by theſe meditations, ſo natural to the houſe of mourning. The ſtrength of corruptions is weakened, and temptations are driven away. If we are the wiſe, we rejoice in God, we enter with alacrity on duty, we are prepared to make any ſacrifices—to take up the croſs, and follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goeth, and are inſpired with precious foretaſtes of the world to come: We learn to truſt in God. The pious mourner obtains ſweet reſignation, comfort, and even the ſpirit of praiſe, and pants for the bleſſings of the inviſible world; and in the mean time, leans on God, whoſe fullneſs and excellency are ſo impreſſively brought into view. O how full, how ſurpriſing, how precious the conſolation! Death is contemplated as the gate of heaven, and attending a funeral becomes a means of ſpiritual refreſhment.

How naturally do theſe reflections enkindle in the hearts of the truly wiſe, a more earneſt benevolence for men, and a diſpoſition to labor and pray, that they may be all brought into the kingdom of Chriſt?

But perhaps I have followed this train of meditations ſufficiently. I am ſure I have followed it, till every reader, who delights in ſpiritual things, is ready to ſay, "It is better to go to the houſe of mourning, than to the houſe of feaſting." The entertainments are incomparably more uſeful and ſatisfying. And is there one, who is not convinced that it will be his own fault, if the next houſe of mourning he enters, is not profitable to him, beyond the ordinary occurrences of life?

But we muſt leave theſe comforting reflections, and attend to one, which is truly melancholy—to the character of thoſe, whoſe hearts are in the houſe of mirth. God calls them fools; and a few obſervations will ſuffice to ſhow that he has given them their true character. Feaſting and mirth are the well known expedients of men, who cannot endure reflections, and the proſpects of futuri-

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of a part of the angelic hoſt—the apoſtacy of man—the great work of redemption—and every volition and action conſequent on thoſe great events. It includes every event, great or ſmall, that ever has or ever will take place in the ſyſtem. It is certain alſo, that infinite wiſdom and infinite goodneſs have choſen the *beſt poſſible plan.* As the human body is compoſed of veins, arteries, nerves and fibres, ſo this great plan is compoſed of an infinite variety of events, which I have no doubt will eventually all harmonize (however blind mortals may judge of appearances to the contrary), and become ſuch a great *whole* as ſhall redound to the higheſt poſſible glory to the three perſons in the ſacred Trinity, and the moſt conſummate, inconceivable happineſs to every individual of the redeemed, and of all holy beings. With reſpect to myſelf, I am but a ſmall ſpeck of exiſtence when compared to the great whole; yet my exiſtence, with every circumſtance of it, is important as a part of the great plan; and it was that God might be glorified in the ſalvation, or final, juſt condemnation of ſuch little, vile and otherwiſe inſignificant creatures, that the great Redeemer took on him our nature and made complete atonement for ſin. Now when I deſire any good for myſelf, as eaſe from pain—reſtoration to health and uſefulneſs—the life, health and happineſs of thoſe who are dear to me, or my own eternal ſalvation—when I deſire to become a member of the glorious and holy family of God in heaven, and enjoy the light, the bright viſion of Deity in the face of the glorified Saviour, and go no more out of his preſence, but join and continue with all my dear friends in praiſing him who loved us and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood, and know that we ſhall be ſafe from all danger of offending him, *forever*—(O how inexpreſſibly deſirable!) When I deſire any or all theſe things, I may know and be aſſured that they will be beſtowed by infinite wiſdom and goodneſs, if it is conſiſtent with this *beſt poſſible plan.* But if it is not, and there could be ſuch a thing as my being admitted among the bleſſed, or enjoying any deſirable earthly good, inconſiſtent with the beſt good of the whole, it would argue imperfection in God to grant it—It would be a blot in the divine character—introduce diſcord into the ſyſtem, and deſtroy that perfect harmony which conſtitutes happineſs.—It becomes me to rejoice that the Lord reigns and is infinitely wiſe, juſt and good, and to ſubmit cheerfully to all his diſpenſations, as being a part of that great divine plan which will redound to the divine glory and the greateſt poſſible good. I am a ſhort ſighted creature, a ſinful worm of the duſt. I know not what is beſt for myſelf, or for the glory of God. But I know all things will work together for good to them that love God, and place their happineſs in his glory. I deſire therefore to learn this bleſſed leſſon from the Son of God, not to deſire any thing from the hand of God which is not conſiſtent with his own glory and his wiſe, eternal plan. And when I pray that the cup of affliction may paſs from me, I deſire to ſay, *not my will but thine be done.*

January, 1803.

A Funeral Meditation.

WE are often called to houſes of affliction—to the

bedſide of the ſick and dying, and to attend the funeral ſolemnities of the deceaſed. Decency, friendſhip and relation collect many on ſuch occaſions, who have little deſire to attend on ſerious things, and are very uncomfortable when they are urged upon them. They hate thoſe ſights of diſtreſs, which excite reflection. The houſes of ſickneſs and mourning are no places for them, for they bring eternity and its great ſolemnities into view, which are but unwelcome and uncomfortable tho'ts. Scenes of buſineſs, mirth and feſtivity, are more deſirable; theſe ſuit their hearts, ſtifle reflections, and keep off thought. Their viſits to places which bring futurity into view, are as ſeldom and ſhort as decency will permit. Such views produce a chilling horror; they ſhrink back from the ideas. No cheering comforts, no ſweet conſolations refreſh their ſpirits, drawn from the ennobling contemplations of eternity, and the intereſting ſcenes which enrapture the mind earneſtly fixed on the inviſible world.

Others equally hate the diſſipation of thought, produced by feſtivity and mirth. Serious ſcenes are more welcome, inſpire richer entertainment, and fix the mind upon ſubjects which never cloy. "The heart of the wiſe is in the houſe of mourning: but the heart of the fool is in the houſe of mirth." In ſuch an houſe, things beyond this life ruſh upon almoſt every mind, whether they give comfort, or painful reflections.—The reaſon why the godly take real ſatisfaction, in being preſent on mournful occaſions, is not, as the ſons of vanity would ſuggeſt, becauſe their hearts are hard and unfeeling, and can on that account more eaſily endure ſights of anguiſh and diſtreſs. It is common for the gay to pay themſelves a compliment, they by no means deſerve, that 'their nerves were never ſufficiently hardened to endure ſuch moving ſcenes, that they excite an exquiſite ſenſibility in them, too painful to be borne.' But though they would by this caſt an oblique reflection on ſuch as take pleaſure in bearing a part with the afflicted, it is but pretence. Far other reaſons than tenderneſs and humanity drive them from ſights of wretchedneſs, to houſes of mirth and laughter; nor is it becauſe the pious are unfeeling, that they love to weep with ſuch as weep, and attend them in their deepeſt ſorrows, and contemplate with them, the things which ſuch mournful occaſions ſuggeſt to the mind.

The heart of the wiſe is in the houſe of mourning, becauſe the objects which preſent themſelves, on ſuch occaſions, are calculated to inſpire the moſt uſeful reflections. Death is the end of every thing on earth. The dead have departed to another world. The ſight of their remains impreſſes on the mind the vanity of the objects of general purſuit. We follow them in our imaginations into the inviſible ſtate: The importance of that world riſes upon our minds: We are intereſted in it, *as it reſpects our deceaſed friend.* We contemplate his ſituation: We enquire with ourſelves, where is he? What is his preſent ſtate? Is he happy or miſerable? Will his happineſs or miſery be eternal? Is he beyond hope, or above fear? What ſociety is he now in? What are his preſent employments? How does he view his paſt life, and the things of this buſy world? Our minds are carried to the word of God—the only book which fur-

niſhes us with inſtructions on this ſubject. We have new ideas of its importance, and attend to it with greater earneſtneſs. We are imperceptibly led to become intereſted in things inviſible *for ourſelves*. The world ſinks; we view ourſelves no more than pilgrims and ſtrangers here; we are impreſſed with the idea of our own departure; it is brought near. We again turn with anxious deſires for information to the only inſtructor to be had. We enquire, where ſhall we ourſelves ſoon be? What is there for us beyond this world? We take a ſerious view of the light caſt upon this ſubject, by the ſcriptures. The magnitude of the rewards and puniſhments it reveals awes our ſpirits. We earneſtly examine the grounds of juſtification, and condemnation; we examine ourſelves; we either are ſatisfied or tremble. We feel the importance of a full preparation, and the folly of delay. We are conſtrained to the reſolution, that we will attend to it immediately. Its importance ſtill riſes upon us; the vanities of the world loſe their influence; the mind is ſwallowed up in the idea of making preparation for the world, where we are to have our everlaſting home.—The houſe of mourning is certainly favorable for theſe reflections. But alas, with many, while at the place of mourning, the heart is either pining for the houſe of mirth, or ſupporting itſelf againſt ſuch natural reflections, by employing its thoughts on the countenance of the deceaſed, the conduct and appearance of the mourners, the parade of the funeral, or other things equally trifling; and their thoughts are conſtrained to wander upon any thing which may come next, to give them relief from the pain of thinking as they ought, and as the occaſion almoſt irreſiſtibly compels them to think. But if we will allow ourſelves to follow the train of thought, which is natural on ſuch an occaſion, we ſhall proceed further. The reſurrection of the dead ſmall and great, with its conſequences will turn upon our minds. We ſhall contemplate ourſelves, ſtanding in this immenſe congregation—ſhall anticipate the univerſal ſolemnity which will be impreſſed on every ſoul—ſhall contemplate all, ſtanding before God, the books opened, and the dead judged out of the things written in the books, according to their works. Our conduct in this world will then appear, O how intereſting! How ſolemn it is to be now preparing the materials for our endleſs deſtiny! The judgment which will then be paſſed, will naturally employ our thoughts, as we ſit meditating in the houſe of mourning. We are ſtruck with the idea of the unchangeable and irreverſible deciſion, which will then be given. Again we look into ourſelves—conſider our hearts and lives, and enquire, for what ſentence have we been preparing ourſelves? What portion are we to expect? Our hopes and fears preſs into view. We look forward into a profound eternity—no end, no ſhore, no period is to be even contemplated. Solemnity poſſeſſes our whole ſouls: We are intereſted. We enquire into the character of God our judge. We look about us for dependence: In ourſelves we find none. Chriſt and his ſalvation are the only things which afford any proſpect of deliverance and bleſſedneſs. We contemplate the terms of acceptance with him—we realize that we muſt have him for our Saviour, or we

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ty, to baniſh thought, and rid themſelves of theſe profitable, but to them uncomfortable meditatations. It would not be wiſe, though it ſhould ſucceed to huſh conſcience entirely, and keep themſelves delirious with mirth, till they ſhould awake in hell; or even, if their fooliſh merriment could laſt forever; for it would exclude them from the rational and ſatisfying enjoyments of the pious ſoul. However, their mirth while here, will not ſave them from occaſional returns of reflection, and painful forebodings of the miſeries which are coming upon them. They will not ſtay the hand of juſtice. Buſineſs, diverſion and every expedient will fail. Death, attended with infinite horrors to ſuch, is on its way—they muſt appear at the reſurrection and ſtand before God, and receive their doom. Their mirth baniſhes uſeful reflections, ſurrounds them with temptations, hardens them againſt inſtruction, makes occaſional reflections full of horror, leads them to hate the ſanctuary, the bedſides of the ſick and dying, and the ſolemn admonitions of a funeral. They become hardened, and their caſe in a meaſure deſperate, becauſe they cannot bear to think as they ought, and they conclude that they muſt run the riſk of dying as they are. Hence they liſten to, and frequently imbibe the poiſon of lax and infidel opinions, by trying as much as poſſible to diſbelieve the painful truths. But alas, it will not be long, before the intoxication of vanity will be over, and they will be conſtrained to *think*, and, dreadful indeed! to *think forever*. "Woe unto you that laugh now, for ye ſhall mourn and weep. It is better to go to the houſe of mourning, than to the houſe of feaſting, for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to heart."

BROTOS.

FOR THE CONNECTICUT EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE.

Thoughts on 1 *Theſſalonians*, iv. 16. *laſt clauſe*: "*And the dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt.*"

THE apoſtle having heard of the death of ſome pious members of the church in Theſſalonica, he ſends unto his Chriſtian friends, who were mourners, a meſſage of condolence, a cordial for their bleeding hearts, to moderate their grief, and to wipe off their flowing tears—and informs them, that their dear friends (tho' dead,) were not loſt, but ſhould, with all the pious dead, be looked up, and be raiſed at the general reſurrection morning. For as Chriſt died and roſe again, them alſo who ſleep in Jeſus will God bring with him to grace the triumphs of his appearance; for this we ſay unto you by the word of the Lord, by immediate and expreſs revelation from Chriſt, that we who are alive and remain, that thoſe Chriſtians found alive on the earth when Chriſt cometh to judgment, ſhall not prevent them, the pious dead who ſleep in their graves. Prevent, in the original, ſhall not go before them, to meet the Lord, and be glorified. Then the apoſtle with an inſpired pen draws a ſolemn picture of Chriſt's appearance. He ſhall deſcend from heaven, arrayed in the robes of a judge, and majeſty of God. Then theſe words; and the dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt. By the dead in Chriſt is meant the pious dead, thoſe who ſleep in Jeſus. Thoſe dead ſhall riſe firſt. Unto what doth this refer? Not to the

reſurrection of the wicked; for there is no mention made in this place of their riſing, only of the pious dead; then the word *firſt* muſt mean, that the ſaints ſhall ariſe from their graves, at the *final* coming of Chriſt, *firſt* in order, before the ſaints, who ſhall be found alive, be changed. Then ſays the apoſtle, we that are alive, and remain, being changed, ſhall be caught up together with them, the ſaints raiſed, and all join in one happy company to meet the Lord in the air, ſo ſhall we be ever with the Lord; ſharers in glories, and happineſs everlaſting.

Compare 1 Corinthians, xv. 51. 52. The apoſtle having proved the reſurrection of Chriſt, and ſhewed the neceſſary connection between the reſurrection of Chriſt, and all his ſpiritual ſeed, ſays, behold I ſhew you a myſtery, a ſecret, a doctrine hitherto unknown; we ſhall not ſleep, all true Chriſtians ſhall not be turned into the grave, but we ſhall all be changed; both the ſaints who ſhall be found alive, at Chriſt's coming, and all that ariſe from the dead, be changed into the image of Chriſt, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the laſt trump, (for the trumpet ſhall ſound) and the dead ſhall be raiſed incorruptible, and we, that is thoſe true Chriſtians who are found alive ſhall be changed, and faſhioned like the glorious body of Chriſt, put on incorruption, and be prepared for the ſervices and enjoyments of the celeſtial world. This confirms the preceding expoſition, that the dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe in order firſt, or before the change paſs upon the living ſaints.

If the expoſition of the text in queſtion be juſt, then the inference from this text that the righteous ſhall riſe before the wicked, is without foundation.

Chriſtian mourners over their pious deceaſed friends, may repair to theſe words of the Lord, and find ſtrong conſolation for their bleeding hearts, comforts adminiſtered to them by the holy ghoſt the comforter!

With what anticipated joys may every true believer look forward to the great reſurrection morning; when all that ſleep in Jeſus, ſhall ſpring from their beds of duſt, and all the living ſaints be changed, clad with robes of glory—when all redeemed ſinners ſhall meet in all the endearments of Chriſtian friendſhip and affection, and in happy company aſcend to meet the Lord, to ſee him whom their ſouls love, who redeemed them with his own blood, and to meet the approbating ſmiles of their judge, and Chriſt at their head, with rapture wing their way to manſions in their heavenly Father's houſe; and be forever with the Lord; and all the ranſomed of the Lord ſit down on the banks of unceaſing, flowing ſtreams of heavenly bliſs, and rehearſe unto liſtening angels the everlaſting ſtory of redeeming love!—AMEN.

ALLELUIA.

Religious Intelligence.

Extract of a Letter from the Rev. Seth Williſton, one of the Connecticut Miſſionaries, dated WILLINGSBOROUGH, Penn. *Jan. 24th*, 1803, *to one of the Editors.*

"Rev. and dear Sir,

"I HAVE almoſt finiſhed a miſſion of eleven weeks, in the

counties of Luzerne and Wayne. The greater part of the time I have been permitted only to ſow the ſeed, and leave it without knowing whether it would come up: But the laſt part of my miſſion has been more evidently owned and bleſſed of God; and to his name be the glory. I came to a ſettlement called the Nine Partners, in Nicholſon's Townſhip, five weeks ago to day, intending to preach a lecture or two, and then paſs on. But God determined otherwiſe. I came here "at ſupper-time." The firſt text which I preached upon, was 1 Pet. i. 12, concerning the goſpel's being preached with the Holy Ghoſt, ſent down from heaven. This ſeaſon ſeemed to be an illuſtration of the text. This was Monday evening: they urged me to ſtay thro' the week. I agreed to ſtay and preach again the next day. I now agreed to ſtay over the Sabbath. The Sabbath was a remarkably ſolemn day. I believe God was in the midſt of the aſſembly, of a truth. The ſermon in the afternoon was concerning the folly and wickedneſs of men's not improving the little ſpace of life to repent of their ſins, make their peace with God and prepare for heaven. Sabbath evening we had about as full a meeting as in the day time, tho' there was no moon to make it light. The next day I bade them farewel, and rode this week down the Wyaluſing Creek. I ſpent a little more than two weeks up and down the Creek. The people at the Nine Partners lay ſo much on my mind, that I concluded to return and ſee them again. I returned to them a week ago laſt Friday. I found that the work of God had ſpread during my abſence. From that time till to day I have been with them. They have not ſeemed to think it a burthen to attend ſermons day after day, and conferences in the evening. Yeſterday, there were 170 people at meeting, which is a great number for ſuch a ſettlement. Several have obtained a hope of their intereſt in Chriſt. Among theſe there is one man who was firſt a univerſaliſt, and then a deiſt and an open ſcoffer at religion. God ſaw fit to make uſe of his own wickedneſs to awaken him. The Sabbath before I came there, brother Woodward adminiſtered the Lord's ſupper to the little church, which conſiſts of eight members, and this man made game of it, and endeavored to turn into ridicule this holy ordinance. But the grace of our Lord has been exceeding abundant towards him. It appears, that for this cauſe he has obtained mercy, that in him firſt Jeſus Chriſt might ſhow forth all long-ſuffering for a pattern to others. The great alteration which has taken place in this man, has appeared to be a great mean in the hand of the Spirit to awaken the attention of other ſtupid ſinners. He now declares, that the contemptuous language which he uſed with reſpect to the ſacrament was made uſe of to awaken his fears. Thus was Goliah ſlain by his own ſword. There is another man, who has been an open deiſt, whoſe mouth is ſtopped. He believes that Jeſus is the Son of God, and hopes he loves him. There is a conſiderable number in the ſettlement, whoſe attention is much called up to things of the greateſt importance, and ſome are under deep concern and conviction. They appear fully convinced they have never done any thing but ſin againſt God all their days. Some

of them alſo ſee clearly that all they are now engaged about is to ſecure their *own* happineſs. The doctrines of grace are believed, and apparently loved by thoſe who have obtained a hope—they are believed and hated by thoſe under legal conviction. The old profeſſors appear to have been, in ſome meaſure, waiting for this conſolation to Iſrael. They rejoice in what they ſee—they are aſtoniſhed at the goodneſs of God. It exceeds their hopes. The work has been very rapid, and is yet increaſing; and at the ſame time very ſtill and orderly. There is an unbounded deſire to hear—"The word of the Lord is precious in theſe days." They thank God for his marvellous grace; and they expreſs their thankfulneſs to the miſſionary ſocieties, and all who have been inſtrumental in ſending laborers into their harveſt.

"We aſk your prayers and the prayers of our chriſtian brethren in Connecticut, that theſe hopeful beginnings may iſſue in a glorious harveſt in theſe deſtitute ſettlements. Pray for your unworthy and obliged friend and brother,

SETH WILLISTON.

"P. S. Since the date of this letter, I have ſeen a man from the Nine Partners ſettlement, who mentions to me ſeveral new inſtances of awakening. He alſo tells me of ſeveral families. where the morning and evening ſacrifice has, within a few days, been introduced."

THE Editors are very happy to inform their readers, that from accurate intelligence recently received, there are hopeful appearances of a revival of religion in ſeveral pariſhes in Middleſex county in this State. They hope ſoon to be furniſhed with further information reſpecting this work of God and to be able to aſſure the public that God is in very deed carrying on a glorious work in that part of the country.

THE Editors take the liberty to remind the good people of Connecticut that the firſt Sabbath of May next, their charitable contributions will be again ſolicited for the ſupport of miſſions. The intelligence publiſhed from time to time in this Magazine, reſpecting the benefit which has accrued from former contributions, it is preſumed will induce the pious and benevolent to continue their liberal donations for the promotion of ſo important an object.

POETRY.

COMMUNICATED AS ORIGINAL.

I. *Recovery from Sickneſs.*

1. LORD, thou haſt rais'd my fainting head,
And lengthen'd out my days;
And while thou giv'ſt me breath to ſing,
My lips ſhall ſound thy praiſe.

2. As parents with a melting heart,
A wayward child reprove,
So thou in mercy doſt chaſtiſe
The children of thy love.

3. And when in kind diſpleaſure, Lord,
Thou doſt their wand'rings chide,
Thy pity ſoon returns, and lays
The lifted rod aſide.

4. In deep diſtreſs I cried to thee,
Thou heard'ſt my mournful prayer,
And lo! thy healing hand appear'd
To bring deliv'rance near.

5. At thy command, the fever fled
With all its burning pain;
Joyful I left my reſtleſs bed,
And roſe to health again.

6. So when the priſon'd captive ſees
Some kind deliv'rer come,
He feels new ſtrength, and wing'd with joy,
Flies to his long-loſt home.

II. *Prayer for a bleſſing on Sickneſs.*

1. 'TWAS not blind chance that laid me low,
Nor chance my health reſtor'd;
In each, my God, I ſee thy hand,
And be thy name ador'd.

2. Father, if I indeed may call
Thee by a name ſo dear,
With thy rebuke thy bleſſing grant,
And teach my ſoul thy fear.

3. My health with all its cluſt'ring ſweets
Teach me aright to prize;
And 'midſt thy bounties let my heart
In conſtant thanks ariſe.

4. Yet let not earth's enjoyments lead
My heedleſs feet aſtray;
But teach me as a ſtranger here
To walk the heav'nly way.

5. Oh, let my beſt affections, Lord,
Be ſet on things above:
There fix this wav'ring, wand'ring heart,
Nor let it thence remove.

6. Subdue each ſinful, low deſire
Within this ſoul of mine;
My God, let ev'ry wiſh I form
And ev'ry thought be thine.

7. How countleſs have thy mercies been,
How large thy grace to me!
Oh, let this life which thou haſt ſav'd
Be all reſign'd to thee.

8. Prepare me, Lord, with thee to dwell
In heav'n's delightful plains,
Where ſin and pain are known no more,
Where boundleſs pleaſure reigns.

III. *Abſence from pious friends.*

1. MY God, thy preſence and thy grace
Can drive my cares away;
Thy love can cheer my ſaddeſt hour,
And turn my night to day.

2. Though in a dreary waſte I walk,
My ſoul ſhall fear no ill;
If on my head thy candle ſhine,
The wilderneſs ſhall ſmile.

3. Though from my pious friends remov'd,
To me ſo juſtly dear,
Thou, Lord, art preſent ſtill with them,
And thou art preſent here.

4. Ev'n abſent, we can ſtill enjoy,
Around thy throne of grace,
Communion ſweet in humble prayer,
And ſongs of ſacred praiſe.

5. Haſten, O Lord, that joyful day
When all who thee adore,
Shall meet around thy throne above,
And parting be no more.

PHILANDER.

Donations to the Miſſionary Society of Connecticut, from February 15th to March 15th, 1803.

	D.	C.
Rev. Jedidiah Buſhnell, contributed in new ſettlements, .	16	64
Rev. George Colton, Bolton, ...	30	

NOTE.

SINCE this Magazine went to preſs, ſome very intereſting communications have come to hand from the London Miſſionary Society to the Truſtees of the Miſſionary Society of Connecticut, extracts from which will be publiſhed in the next Magazine. From theſe communications it appears that the miſſionary cauſe is proſpered, and there is great reaſon to hope that the London Society will be made the inſtruments of promoting pure Chriſtianity in France and the northern parts of Italy.